RELIGION AND MORALITY

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RELIGION AND MORALITY

THEIR NATURE AND MUTUAL RELATIONS, HISTORICALLY AND DOCTRINALLY CONSIDERED

DISSERTATION FOR THE DOCTORATE IN THEOLOGY
AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA :: :: ::

BY THE
REV. JAMES J. FOX, S.T.D.

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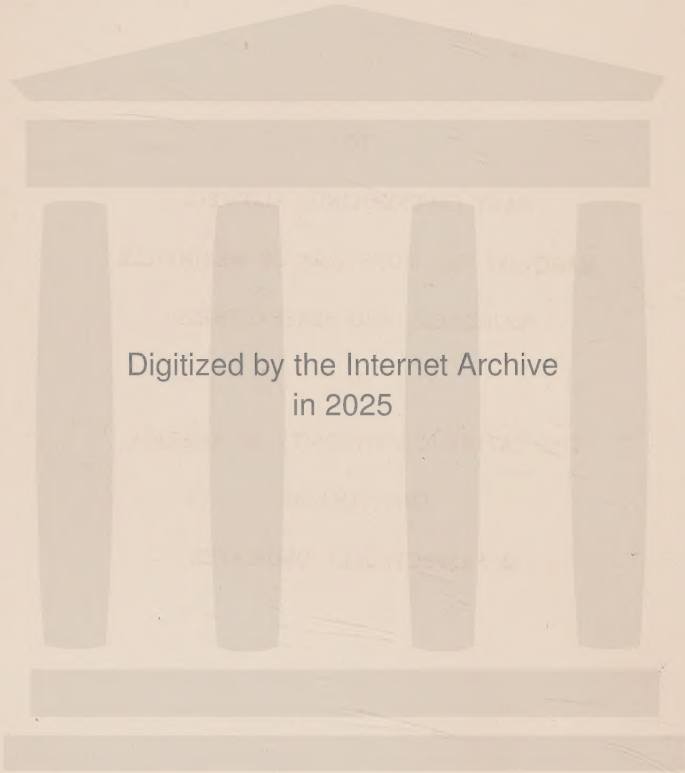

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TO

MARY GWENDOLINE CALDWELL

MARQUISE DES MONSTIERS DE MÉRINVILLE

FOUNDRESS AND BENEFACTRESS

OF

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

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INTRODUCTION.

FEW questions command a wider or deeper interest, to-day, than the one with which this volume deals. It presents itself, directly or indirectly, in almost every field of scientific thought. For the theologian, it may be called the question of paramount importance; because the issue, at present, between religion and unbelief, is less the truth or falsehood of some particular dogma, or system of dogma, than whether religion is, or is not, indispensable to the moral welfare of mankind. Philosophic inquiry into origins and ends necessarily includes Ethics, and, consequently, must examine the relations between the moral and the religious sentiment. History, Ethnology and Anthropology, treating of origin and development, from the empirical standpoint, find, everywhere, the same grand factors of human life in constant contact for good or evil. Students of the Social Sciences, analyzing the great forces which are in play in social organization, see that religion and morality exercise an influence which cannot be overrated; and, to determine their importance, their mutual bearings are investigated. Hence we find that sciences which differ widely in their scope and methods, all reach common ground in the moral and religious problem. And while this subject claims the attention as well of those who investigate present conditions, as of those who endeavor to reconstruct the past, it occupies, perhaps still more, others who are engaged in the more precarious task of forecasting the future.

While the importance of the subject suggested it as deserving of treatment, its extent and the many difficul-

ties involved in it were, on the other hand, an argument against attempting to handle it within the limits of a dissertation. To any one, however, reflecting on the manner in which not a few popular text-books of Ethics, as well as other works, and articles in periodicals of standing, treat the important question, it is evident that even a brief treatment of the subject may refute much error, and remove still more confusion, propagated regarding the relations of religion and morality.

In the following pages my aim is not to treat the subject exhaustively, nor to enter into a detailed examination of all that is implied either in the moral or the religious sentiment. And, it is needless to add, I do not profess to publish any new discoveries in Ethics, nor even any original argument against the opponents of religion. The insufficiency and pernicious consequences of independent morality have been laid bare by many writers, such as Messrs. Balfour, Bixby, Lilly, and Mallock. What concerns the exposition of Christian Ethics, natural and supernatural, may be found in all the standard works of Catholic Theology. Indeed, as the divine origin of the Moral Law is a belief shared by all Christians, this truth has been ably defended by many Protestant writers; as, for example, by the Reverend James Kidd, in a work whose title closely resembles that of this book. In showing, however, the bearing of the great underlying principle of Christian dogma upon conduct, I have ventured to deviate from the order of treatment usually followed, and hope thereby to have met, more directly, some of the more specious arguments advanced for independent morality. The historical side of the problem, too, is dealt with more fully than, as far as I know, it has been by any one else, with a view to bring out the full significance of the spectacle presented, throughout the ages, of mankind kneeling

> "Upon the great world's altar-stairs
> That slope thro' darkness up to God."

In my work I have derived considerable help from the invaluable treatise of Taparelli, as well as from the *Theologia Moralis Fundamentalis* of Professor Bouquillon. And I should be wanting in gratitude, not to say justice, if I failed to acknowledge my obligations to the author of the latter work, himself, for judicious guidance and many very helpful suggestions.

J. J. F.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA,
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RELIGION AND MORALITY.

PART I.—INTRODUCTORY.

CHAPTER I.

MORALITY.

NOTION; UNIVERSALITY; ORIGIN.

THE actions which, in the aggregate, make up human life are distinguished into two kinds, those which are performed without being subject to any deliberate control of the agent, and those which he can omit, or perform, and in performing them, direct to a preconceived end, for the realization of a purpose. In other words, a large sphere of action is the outcome of deliberate will. In such actions, besides their physical, we recognize another element, offering a basis for the classification of action or conduct into good and bad. There is a tendency in the mind to consider deliberate actions with reference to their conformity to some law or rule. If an act is judged to possess this conformity we call it good; otherwise it is bad.[1] If an action is of such a character that we estimate it as good, then we judge its performance to be right, if it be of the opposite character, to do such an act we judge to be wrong.

This discrimination of conduct into right and wrong

[1] See St. Thomas: Summa, 1–2, q. 18, a. 9

implies some end or purpose of action, and some inherent characteristic, the presence of which indicates that an action is calculated to attain the end of conduct, whilst a contrary element renders the act incapable of reaching the end. There must then be available for the mind, some measure or standard by means of which the presence or absence of that characteristic is determined.

When, by the application of this standard, an act is found to be wanting in righteousness or rightness, there arises in the mind the perception of some principle of limitation or compulsion which is expressed in the practical judgment: This act ought not to be done. If, on the other hand, we perceive that an action conforms to the standard in such a manner that its omission would produce in conduct a want of conformity to the criterion of righteousness, then the act is judged to be necessary.

Another fact universally recognized is that actions performed with deliberation are regarded as belonging to the agent in a special manner, not shared by those actions over which he has no control. Reason tells me, for example, that my writing at this moment, which I can interrupt or continue at will, is an outcome of my personality, and is to be ascribed to me and identified with me, in some way entirely different from the manner in which the concurrent act of respiration belongs to me. Because the act of writing is a play of my own free deliberate activity, an extension, in some sort, of my personality, the result I have aimed at is mine too, for good or bad. I have been the cause of it. The action is imputable to me, and I am answerable for its result.

The facts brought out in this analysis are the basic elements of the moral life,—a distinction between good and bad, right and wrong, a criterion of discrimination, an end of conduct, a tie binding in some manner the will to embrace the right and avoid the wrong, and responsibility of the agent for the result of his action.

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Another element of morality is the existence of right. There is no end to the literature that has been inflicted on us to explain the origin and scope of the term right. But the attempts have ended more frequently in the production of fog than in the diffusion of light. Though the definition has raised endless controversy, nobody fails to grasp the idea which underlies the term. We observe a man riding a horse; he has physical control of the animal: is it his? The physical power will not be received by anybody as an argument sufficient for an affirmative answer. The point to be considered is, has he any moral claim to it, any tie that binds it to him as belonging to him, so that everybody else is restricted from depriving him of the object. If such a moral power is vested in him, then, though the animal should escape from his control, it remains his property; he has a right to it. This right is made up of two correlative elements, the owner's moral power over the object, and the restriction imposed on everybody else of respecting that power. An ethical system must render a satisfactory account of the origin of this power and its inviolability.

The primitive meaning of the word morality may be seen from its derivation to have had reference to custom, usage, or law, but it has come to designate uprightness and righteousness. Two separate senses in which the term is used must be carefully distinguished. In the first, which has been rightly called the generic sense, it means the quality pertaining to action, inasmuch as it is divided into right and wrong, and is subject to a principle of obligation. In this sense the moral is opposed to non-moral. Murder is a moral act, in this acceptation of the term, for it is an act involving deliberation and foresight;—the killing of a man by a machine is a non-moral act. Morality may, however, be used to express the correspondence of conduct with the rule of righteousness; and then it is opposed to immorality. It may seem unnecessary to insist

upon a distinction of usage so obvious: but not a little misdirected effort in ethical writing has arisen from the neglect of it. Because some tribes have a standard of morality falling far below that recognized by civilized nations, so that their conduct, when tried by the latter, is grossly immoral, it is contended that such tribes are devoid of morality altogether, and that, consequently, morality is not a universal characteristic of man. The universality of morality depends not upon whether all men recognize theoretically and practically a moral standard of any special degree of elevation, but whether they are conscious of a distinction between right and wrong.

Morality, then, consists in the regulation of conduct, by the direction and co-ordination of free activity to some end. Its root lies in man's reason and will; the former perceiving and announcing a certain course as calculated to attain the due end, the latter directing his activities. The moral sphere will consequently embrace all the relationships which, in the development of his activities, arise between man and those objects with which his actions bring him into contact. Besides the relationships arising between man and objects external to himself, there are other relationships which fall under the cognizance of reason. In the rational being, there are many powers and capacities, faculties, appetites, tendencies forming a microcosm in themselves. Some of these are subject to the control of the will as directed by reason. Other relationships arise between him and his fellow-beings. And if he depends for existence on a Supreme Being, evidently the first and most fundamental of all relationships is that which binds the contingent to the Absolute.

The question arises now, do all or only some of these relationships constitute the field of morals? It is fashionable nowadays to restrict morality to the relations existing between men, and exclude all the relationships which exist between the various elements in the human

personality; as well as that which refers to the Creator. If, however, morality is essentially the rationalization of conduct,—and everybody will admit this definition,—then the field of morality must embrace all activities that are capable of regulation by reason and will. Nor can it be denied that many actions which neither directly nor indirectly regard our neighbor, are yet susceptible of such regulation. To exclude, then, such self-regarding actions from the domain of morals is an arbitrary proceeding for which no reason can be offered except that such a restricted view of morality will harmonize with some particular ethical theory. If social welfare is taken as the true end of conduct, from which all moral values derive, a great embarrassment arises when the goodness or badness of many self-regarding actions has to be accounted for; and the only way out of the difficulty is to affirm that such actions are altogether outside the scope of morality. But this contention is contradicted by the testimony of conscience, which pronounces on such actions with the same authoritativeness as on any other kind of action. Both conscience and logic require that all action capable of regulation by the rational will, and consequently imputable to the agent, falls within the domain of morality.

Those who do not acknowledge the existence of God, those who by relegating Him to the region of the unknowable logically deny the possibility of any duty towards Him, and pantheists who maintain an identity between the contingent and the Absolute, may consistently exclude from morality all religious duty. But if we admit the existence of God, and man's dependence upon Him, with duties consequently arising, there is no ground for denying such duties to be a part of rational conduct. Yet many ethical writers who believe in a Supreme Being, man's beginning and end, to whom we owe worship and obedience, profess to treat the principles of the whole field of Ethics, yet do so without any reference to the

duties which man owes to God.[1] Does such method betray a failure to grasp the nature of morality, or a timid subservience to fashionable Agnosticism? Such duties, it will be said, appertain to religion. They do; but if we conclude that, therefore, they cease to be moral conduct, we imply that in any manifestation of his religious sentiment man ceases to be rational. We cannot define the extent of the moral world, as the world of rational conduct without bringing morality and religion into connection. But it is needless to observe that the controversy as to the interdependence of religion and morality does not regard this minor point of contact. The question at issue is whether the structure upon which morality fundamentally rests stands firm though we ignore the relation of man to God, which is the essential constitutive principle of religion.

Since morality springs from the nature of human reason as the guide of the will in the realization of human activity; we may expect that a recognition of a moral distinction between different kinds of actions is as universal as humanity itself. And in fact we find that in the lowest condition of life, as it exists among savages, there prevails an acceptation of some limitation to action besides that of physical capacity or external coercion. Many savage tribes practise the grossest immorality, without apparently any consciousness that they are violating rules of right and wrong. The existence of such practices may be adduced, though it is insufficient to prove, that no universally known principles of conduct prevail among men. The savage who murders his prisoner because such is the established custom of his tribe gives evidence in this action that he does recognize a standard of conduct, however false that standard may be. In some of the Polynesian islands children believe that it is their duty to kill

[1] See Sidgwick: Methods of Ethics; p. 218. Bowne: The Principles of Ethics.

their decrepit parents who can look forward to nothing but increasing misery from a prolongation of existence. Here is a perception—a very immoral perception—of moral obligation. The Australian whose conscience felt uneasy till in revenge for the murder of his wife he had killed a woman belonging to the murderer's tribe evinced a consciousness of duty. In the interests of the evolutionary theories of morality, it is sometimes asserted that there are tribes found destitute of all moral perception. The testimony of travelers is brought forward in support of this opinion; and this testimony is seldom submitted to the reasonable criticism which would usually divest it of all value. Janet [1] has very justly observed that travelers are usually but poorly equipped, and seldom much disposed to take the steps necessary to make such investigations into the morals of the peoples whom they visit as would yield reliable data. He points out that, starting without any definite program for the examination of the moral psychology of primitive peoples, they are disposed to make random observations, laying undue stress on differences much more than on the analogies which exist between the savage and the civilized condition. They are, besides, incapable of impartial observation; they have almost insurmountable difficulties in reaching the inner beliefs and convictions of savages who, naturally suspicious towards strangers, never willingly reveal to them their motives and views. Among the facts brought forward to prove that there is no morality among certain savages, two very distinct things, as the same writer judiciously remarks, are confused, customs and opinions. Conduct which argues a total want of any deference to a moral standard may be witnessed, yet we are not thereby justified in concluding that it indicates the absence of any perception between right and wrong. Such actions may indicate a lower moral tone; or they may show a neglect

[1] La Morale, chap. iv.

of an admitted standard. Before we can conclude that in any group of men the moral sense is entirely absent, we must know that not alone there exists no repugnance to certain immoral actions, but that in all the sphere of conduct all actions are regarded as equally indifferent, none approved, and none condemned. Isolated facts, adduced by travelers—and the testimony of none presents anything more than isolated facts—fall far short of establishing this condition. It is sometimes urged that certain tribes do not even possess a word expressing honesty, sin, crime. This fact argues a great paucity of their vocabulary, but nothing more. Against the allegation of the absence of morality in some tribes we may set the mature judgment of the eminent anthropologist, M. Quatrefages, who has no theory to support: "Confining ourselves rigorously to the region of facts, and carefully avoiding the territory of philosophy and theology, we may state without hesitation that there is no human society, or even association in which the idea of *good* and *evil* is not represented by certain acts regarded by the members as morally good, or morally bad."[1] He says too: "Among the customs prevailing among savages there are a great number which are at variance with the most natural passions, such as the instinct of reproduction, the choice of nourishment, etc., etc. An infringement of these laws is followed by a punishment often terrible. Is it not evident that the greater number of these can only be based upon the more or less distinct idea of good and evil?"[2]

The perception of a right and a wrong in conduct is analogous to the perception of a true and a false. Judgments based on perceptions of the former kind are practical, not affirming or denying existence, but the existence of some necessity for operation or abstention from operation. As we cannot conceive reason in activity at all, without assuming that it naturally distinguishes be-

[1] L'Espèce Humaine, chap. xxxiv. [2] Ibid.

tween a true and a false, so we must admit that where reason has reached even the lowest grade of what may be considered normal development there is present the native tendency to apply the distinction of a right and a wrong. The application of this distinction, and the consequent classification of conduct is a part of rational development. As man enters into relations with the world around him, with his fellow-beings, in the associations of the family, tribal and national life, reason, enlightened by reflection and experience, applies the distinction of right and wrong, in constantly widening sweeps, to conduct.

The psychological root of morality being the rational nature itself, to trace its historical origin is to investigate and determine the origin of man. Ethical writers of the evolutionary school, in their endeavor to find in the lower animals the germ of all the phenomena of human life, attempt to show that some of these animals exhibit a rudimentary moral sense. The habits of bees, beavers, ants, have been carefully studied for proof that such rudimentary morality exists in them. Letourneau approaches the study of moral development through an extensive review of the method of training dogs. Herbert Spencer describes the summary processes resorted to in a rookery against piratical members. Darwin has immortalized a certain monkey that covered the retreat of the tribe out of danger, with a devotedness that leaves little pre-eminence to the heroism of Horatius, or of the Three Hundred at Thermopylæ. However interesting and edifying these facts may be, to qualify them with the term moral is to do violence to language. According to accepted usage, morality signifies a quality essentially pertaining to an intelligent being, capable as such of recognizing a law, and of conforming his action to it. Those who maintain that man is but a brute evolved to a higher degree of perfection, admit, nevertheless, that the developed product is essentially different from the original material, and that the

ethical character, and the sense of obligation is rational, not instinctive, and belongs to man alone. If it pleases anybody to declare that something else, bearing to morality a resemblance more or less striking according to the observer's fancy, or his desire to justify a theory conceived on other grounds, is the origin from which morality springs, this assumption of origin does not identify the two. Unless we wish to confound *is* with *ought*, and turn Ethics into Biology, no speculation upon the behavior of bees, crows, or even the most heroic of monkeys, throws any light on the nature of morality. Moral values are affirmed by reason; to assume that their validity is in any way dependent on biological questions of origins is akin to making the truth of the binomial theorem depend upon the manner in which a savage first comes to recognize that the whole is larger than its half.

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CHAPTER II.

RELIGION.

§ 1. *Notion of Religion.*

WHILE there is a general agreement as to what is meant by morality and what are its elements, no such harmony prevails as to what constitutes religion. "We can hardly open a book," says Max Müller, after having reviewed several definitions, "without meeting with such similar random definitions of religion. Religion is said to be knowledge, and it is said to be ignorance; religion is said to be freedom, and it is said to be dependence. Religion is said to be desire, and it is said to be freedom from desire. Religion is said to be contemplation, and it is said to be splendid and stately worship of God." Notwithstanding the superabundance which he refers to, Max Müller contributed another to the list. It would be an undertaking of questionable profit and unquestionable tediousness to enter upon an examination of the almost innumerable definitions of religion proposed by men eminent in science and philosophy; of making such definitions there is no end, and the study of them yields little but affliction of spirit. The inspection of a few of the best known, will throw light on the nature of the thing itself.

In his *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, Max Müller defined religion as "A mental faculty, which independent, nay, in spite of sense and reason enables man to apprehend the infinite under various disguises."[1] In deference to a criticism made by Pfleiderer, pointing out that

[1] See Science of Religion: pp. 21 ff.

the definition took no note of the practical side of religion, he amended it to another making religion consist in the perception of the infinite, under such various manifestations, as are able to influence the moral character of man. By the infinite he does not mean the absolutely infinite, but the indefinite, what is beyond the grasp of man.[1] A little reflection, however, makes it clear that the perception of the vague, the indefinite, the unbounded, though it may give rise to wonder, awe, fear, does not awaken any religious feelings, until it is associated with the notion of a person. Manifestations of this indefinite or unbounded, in order that they may influence the moral character of man, require to be apprehended as manifestations of some personality.

The craving of the human mind after the ideal John Stuart Mill takes to be the fundamental element. "The essence of religion," he writes, "is the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires towards an ideal object, recognized as one of the highest excellence, and rightfully paramount over all selfish objects of desire." "So long as human life is insufficient to satisfy human aspirations, so long will there be a craving for higher things, which finds its most obvious satisfaction in religion."[2] This longing after higher things is undoubtedly a feature of religion; but to assume it as the essential would be to exclude all the lower forms of religion, and to admit as religion many things which nobody would call religion. An enthusiastic painter or actor, for example, holding his art in the highest esteem, and prosecuting it not for any motive of benefit, but cultivating art for art's sake, would be a highly religious person. If Mill's view were correct, Bohemia would be the true home of religion. On the other hand, savage races are not troubled with any craving after ideals recognized as of

[1] Natural Religion: p. 102–140.
[2] Three Essays on Religion: p. 104.

the highest excellence. They are usually preoccupied only to secure as long as possible the largest share possible of the good things which fall in their way. Yet, with many, religion is an important factor in their lives. An advance in culture must have been made before yearning can become a prominent feature of man's mental condition. Besides, the definition representing the object of religion merely as a good whose attainment completes the subject's welfare, ignores the notion of dependence. Yet everybody admits that this notion of dependence is at least a prominent element of the religious sentiment; and a correct analysis will bring it out as the essential. In the definition which he proposes, Albert Réville makes the regulation of morality the essential. Though it is quite true that such connection does exist between religion and morality, yet this efficient direction of conduct is not the primordial element. It presumes another perception; when man recognizes a being, in whom is vested the authority to regulate human conduct, he must base this recognition on a sense of his dependence on that being.

While the foregoing conceptions fail to recognize adequately, if at all, the feeling of dependence, as essential, other views fail from an exaggeration in the opposite direction. The most conspicuous among this class is the view of Schleiermacher, who holds religion to consist in a feeling of dependence. Unless we specify dependence with some reference to personality, we shall find that the application of this view leads to ridiculous conclusions. If religion is constituted by any feeling of dependence then, as Hegel observed, the dog is a highly religious animal, or, as somebody else remarked, a man afloat on a log is necessarily an eminently religious person.[1] In Kant's conception of religion there is an exaggeration of a different kind. He makes religion consist in the recognition

[1] This argument of *reductio ad absurdum* was once thought conclusive;

of all our duties as divine commandments.[1] A religion which is highly ethical, as Christianity, will answer the demands of this view; for such an estimate of the relation between religion and morality enters into the Christian conception of the relation on which man stands towards God. But if this definition were correct, any religion which fails to identify the commands of the moral law with the will of the divinity is not a religion at all. Now although, as we shall subsequently see, there is a natural tendency in the human mind to refer the moral law to the divinity, yet in the cruder forms of religion, this reference has not that explicit character which Kant's view calls for. He errs in defining as an essential, an element of religion in its most perfect expression.

Another class of definitions is founded on views which utterly deny the possibility of any dependence of man on the object of religious feeling: for they identify the finite with the infinite. According to Hegel, "Religion is the knowledge acquired by the finite spirit of its essence as an absolute spirit." This view rests upon the philosophy which denies the principle of contradiction, and demands as a first condition of its adoption that we deny all validity to the testimony of consciousness.

With Fichte "Religion is Knowledge. It gives to man a clear insight into himself, answers the highest questions, and thus imparts to us a complete harmony with ourselves, and a thorough sanctification to our minds."[2] This conception narrows religion down to an exercise of the intelligence, to the exclusion of all the emotional elements. Thoroughly pantheistic, it recognizes no personality outside the subjective mind, which is also the Divine Mind, becoming conscious of itself in the finite, and there-

but, nous avons changé tout cela. De la Saussaye, following Darwin, affirms that the relations between a master and his dog are religious. Manual of the Science of Religion, p. 14.

[1] Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft; IV. 1.

[2] See Natural Religion, p. 69.

by working out its own harmony and sanctification. If there is but one mind, no two terms exist, between which a relationship of dependence may lie. Hence the essential element of religion is not alone non-existent but impossible.

Most definitions of religion have been formulated to fit into a preconceived system of philosophy. Others, especially those which abound among writers of the Positivist school, are the result of a wrong empirical method. Evolutionists act upon the theory that the true character of religion is to be found by examining the lowest and crudest forms of religion. Facts concerning the customs of the most debased savages are gathered; and the more debased they are, the stronger the hope of arriving at truth. The assumption is always made that such savages represent primeval man. These facts are compared; all variations are eliminated, the residue is accepted as the true constituent of religion. Undoubtedly if we wish to know what religion is we must consider it under all its various forms, the simple and crude as well as the complex and complete. But if we would arrive at a right estimate we must first consider it in specimens which show a normal stage of development, and from an analysis of these we shall be able to recognize in the lower forms what is the germinal element. The physiologist does not take the fœtus as the type; the anthropologist will not confine himself to the study of children if he wishes to reach a knowledge of a race or people. What should we think of a definition of mathematics pared down till it represented only the knowledge of numbers possessed by a savage who reckons on his fingers and toes? "It is not," said Caird, "that which is common to barbarism and civilization which is most truly human but precisely that in which civilization differs from barbarism."[1] An

[1] Philosophy of Religion, p. 82. See Martineau: A Study of Religion; Introduction, p. 30.

adequate conception of religion must be sought in those religions which show at least an approach to maturity and completeness, with some coherent system of belief and consequent practice. Having thus obtained a just notion of religion, we may then examine the cruder forms and treat them as imperfect or undeveloped. Then, if we find that an element constantly present in all the higher forms, is represented in the lower too, at least in germ, whilst no other concomitant is constant, we have found what is essential in the religious phenomenon. And a definition will be satisfactory which refers to this element neither in its imperfect stage, nor exclusively in its highest form, but which is founded on the normal manifestation.

It can hardly be denied that an examination of existing religions, as well as of those that have passed away, reveals one common characteristic distinctly pronounced in those which have attained any systematic development, and present, at least in a confused or implicit form, in the lowest. This characteristic is a belief in some superior being towards whom man recognizes himself to be placed in a relation of dependence. Systems of philosophy which deny that man can attain to any knowledge of a First Cause, or deny to God attributes analogous to the attributes which in human nature are the constituents of personality, are yet obliged to acknowledge the existence of the religious instinct in human nature. But, as there is no God to be the object of this sentiment, they endeavor to account for religion, by giving to the word an alien signification. Enthusiasm for art, a devotion to poetry, an admiration for the material energies of the cosmos, a high appreciation of the achievements of humanity, may, if anybody wishes, be called religion. But such abuse of words, while sure to produce confusion, will not change the nature of things. These sentiments are quite distinct from a sentiment of dependence upon a

Supreme Being; no application of a single term to feelings widely different in their nature will bring them a whit nearer identification. Religion arises when man recognizes that he is dependent on some being above himself, towards whom he conceives a feeling of reverential awe, or in the lower phases of the phenomenon, fear, and to whom he pays external homage. Such attitude involves a moral relationship. This superior being is conceived as endowed with the characteristics of personality. Influenced by the two factors, the feeling of dependence, and the conception of personality in the object which is the other term of the relationship, man is prompted to a manifestation of his sentiments. Supplications and prayers are addressed to this Being; offerings made to enlist his favor or appease his anger. Religion is not a mere sentiment, nor a mere perception of the intellect. Both the will and the intellect contribute to its genesis. When the intellect recognizes the object of worship and the position which man occupies towards it, various emotions are called into play. In the lower forms, fear predominates. The savage who bows before the thunder-god can hardly experience any other feeling towards that dread personality; but when a higher conception of the divinity is reached, awe succeeds to or accompanies fear. When goodness, truth, beauty, omnipotence, benevolence and mercy are recognized as the attributes of God, the ground is laid for sentiments of reverence and love. From the internal sentiments proceed outward acts of worship, and the regulation of conduct by a rule judged conformable to the will of the Supreme Being. Religion is, therefore, primarily an internal belief and sentiment; secondarily the outward expression of the internal factor. By carefully distinguishing between these two closely-connected, yet distinct elements, it is easy to clear up a great deal of confusion in which many writers have managed to involve the question of the relations between religion and morality.

§ 2. *Universality.*

Religion is the practical answer of man to the questions which, in all ages, have arisen in his mind regarding the mystery of his own and the world's existence. The history of mankind in every age, and in every region of the globe that has been the scene of his activity, witnesses to the fact that the belief and practice of some kind of religion has been a feature of supreme importance in his life. The monuments of remote antiquity which have yielded up their secrets to modern scientific investigation, are almost all of a religious character, or, at least, indicate the religious belief and practices of their constructors. It was generally maintained by the sceptics of the last century that savage races existed destitute of all religious notions. Recent writers, too, advance the same opinion. But what has been already said regarding the value of the evidence offered for opinions denying the universality of morality applies with equal force to the evidence for the absence of religion among some peoples. Much of the testimony relied upon has been found deceptive, and in some cases self-contradictory. Hasty and superficial observations have been corrected by the more careful inquiries of subsequent explorers. Professor Flint [1] has conclusively shown that no value attaches to many of the instances adduced by Sir John Lubbock,[2] and other allegations of travelers, put forward in proof that atheistic races do exist.[3] Frequently missionaries, impressed by the depraved condition of peoples whom they have visited, and assuming that religion means only true religion, have represented such people as having no religion at all. Yet

[1] Antitheistic Theories, Appendix, p. 525. See Brinton: Religions of Primitive Peoples, pp. 19–30.

[2] Origin of Civilization.

[3] The evidence for many such alleged facts is dissipated by Tylor: Primitive Culture, Vol. I, Ch. XI.

these same witnesses frequently describe the superstitious customs of these peoples.

The religious notions entertained by some tribes are far from approaching the idea which was expressed by the word God; but we may not, therefore, state that they have no religion. Many savages are said not to be able to reckon beyond ten, yet we may not, therefore, deny them to possess any knowledge of the science of numbers. Because a savage cannot determine the centre of buoyancy, we may not conclude that he is totally ignorant of boat-building. Everywhere is found, at least in a rudimentary form, the conception and sentiment which is fundamental to all religion. The opinion that atheistical tribes or peoples exist or have existed has had its day, both in anthropology and philosophy. Anyone weighing the extensive data bearing on the question gathered by Tylor,[1] can come to no other conclusion than that the savage mind is everywhere in possession of some religious notions. The judgment of Quatrefages, an acknowledged authority in anthropological science, is:—"We nowhere meet with atheism except in an *erratic condition*. In every place and at all times, the mass of populations have escaped it; we nowhere find either a great human race, or even a division, however unimportant, of the race professing atheism. Such is the result of an inquiry which I am justified in calling conscientious, and which was begun before I assumed the professorship of anthropology. It is true that in these researches I have proceeded and I have formed my conclusions not as a believer or a philosopher, who are all more or less under the influence of an ideal, which they accept or oppose, but exclusively as a naturalist whose chief aim is to seek for and to state facts." [2]

When a few years ago a movement was set on foot for the systematic application of the empirical method to the

[1] Primitive Culture. [2] Op. cit; chap. 35, § 4.

histories of all religions, in order to found a philosophy of religion, the sponsors of the new science certainly were not animated by any desire of aiding the cause of religion. Orthodox persons, whose timidity—as often happens in the ranks of orthodoxy—was greater than their faith in the triumph of truth, augured nothing but disaster from the latest addition to the sisterhood of empirical sciences. But the prophet brought forward to curse has spoken only in benediction. Philosophic inquiry into the history of religions has placed beyond reasonable doubt the conclusion that religion has been everywhere and always an element of human life. A recognized representation of the most rationalistic section of the workers in this path of inquiry, Albert Réville, says:—"La religion est inherente a l'esprit humaine, et naturelle.—On a, en effet, le droit d'appliquer ces termes a ce qui, tout le long de l'histoire, et sur toute la face de la terre habitée se montre inséparable de la nature humaine."[1] Scholars belonging to the most opposite of theological camps meet in harmony on this point. "The statement," writes Tiele, "that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion rests either on inaccurate observations, or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of a belief in any higher being; and travelers who have asserted their existence, have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate, therefore, to call religion, in its most general sense, the universal phenomenon of humanity."[2] In his address to the World's Parliament of Religions, the eminent representative of Catholic thought, De Harlez, stated the same truth: "There is no people without religion, how low soever it may be in the scale of civilization. If there be any in whom the religious idea seems extinct, though this

[1] Prolegemenes à l'histoire des Religions, p. 44. See Revue de l'histoire des Religions, Vol. VI.

[2] Kompendium der Religionsgeschichte, Absc. 1, 6.

certainly cannot be shown, it is because their intelligence has come to that degree of degradation in which it has no longer anything human, save the capacity of being lifted to something higher." [1]

History, then, and ethnology are united in establishing the truth that religion in some form or another is as universal as humanity. When the condition of the human mind is one of darkness and debasement, the religious notions will bear the character of the soil in which they have grown; but in some form or another, to use the phrase of Spencer, Religion is an eternal fact.

We may dismiss the subject with a reference to a statement made by Brinton, which is characteristic of the manner in which evolutionists establish conclusions in harmony with their own theory, when scientific research fails to support their position. After conclusively showing that religion has been a phenomenon of human life from its beginning, he states:—"There must, however, have been a time in the progress of organic forms, from some lower to that highest mammal, Man, when he did not have a religious consciousness; for it is doubtful if even the slightest trace of it can be discerned in the inferior animals." [2] Why *must?* Because some facts have been discovered which show Man as having at one stage of his career been living without any religious consciousness? Brinton declares that such has never been the case. The assumption is made exclusively because the evolutionary theory requires it. Yet to resort to *à priori* argument is supposed to be unworthy of science. Assuming, for argument's sake, the existence of some intermediate organic forms not possessed of religious consciousness, consistency with his previous position required that Brinton should use *they* instead of *he* in the above sentence. He tells us that man always had a religious consciousness; then these

[1] History of the World's Parliament of Religions, Vol. II., p. 613.
[2] Op. cit. pp. 35, 36.

intermediate organisms destitute of religious consciousness cannot be designated by the term dignified with a capital letter. Nor does it seem logical to imply that an intermediate can be at the same time the ultimate term of the same series.

§ 3. *Origin.*

As far back as history carries us into the dim past we find religion an established fact. The most ancient of the Vedas, the pyramids of Egypt, the sacred books of China bear witness to the fact that before they existed religion was already a permanent influence in the life of man. In the still more remote past, philology assures us, when the parent stock of the great Iranian races, had not yet spread beyond the Asiatic table-land, it recognized a supreme God, designated by a name signifying the "Sky God."

The word, after undergoing various phonetic changes, came down to the descendants of the parent stock; and traces of the heritage still survive in Sanscrit, Latin, Greek, and the cognate languages.[1] The discoveries of archæology, in the monuments of what anthropologists call the neolithic period, such as Stonehenge and Karnac, abounding in objects of religious use or signification, prove beyond a doubt that, at that remote period, religion was one of the dominant factors in human life. If no similar discoveries have been made in the remains of the palæolithic period, the absence of them can be explained in various ways which deprives this negative argument of any value.[2]

Whilst the positive source supplies no facts to tell us whence originated religion, we have an abundant supply of theories. The theory of the Sophists, advocated by the free-thinkers of the last century, that religion was

[1] See Max Müller: Origin of Religion, p. 266.

[2] See Brinton: Op. cit. p. 34. Cook: Origin of Related Languages, Darmesteter: Selected Essays, pp. 284–5.

invented by rulers and priests as an instrument for the subjection of the people has not a shred of plausibility to cover its absurdity. Another theory ascribing the origin of religion exclusively to an external cause was that of the traditionalist school. According to it, the human mind left to its native resources is incapable of forming any moral or religious ideas: hence all such ideas are derived from direct revelation. This opinion though intended to be a bulwark for supernatural faith against rationalism, but in reality destroying its support, was rejected by the Catholic Church. The Vatican Council declares: Deus, rerum omnium principium et finis, naturali humanæ rationis lumine, e rebus creatis, certo cognosci potest.[1]

Most of the explanations of the rise of religion agree in assigning to it some internal origin. A view which is usually accredited to the Roman Poet Petronius, makes fear the root of religion.[2] Fear is undoubtedly an element in religious consciousness, at least in its earlier stages; but it is the fear of some already recognized personality. The fear arising from a sense of physical danger is totally inadequate to account for the conception of a being whose protection is invoked against impending evil, or whose anger is propitiated to avert it; besides, it does not account for the elements of Faith, Hope, Love, and Reverence. Euhemerus, a Greek philosopher of the fourth century held that the gods of pagan antiquity were but former rulers or heroes. After death, honors were paid to them, which grew in proportion as tradition gradually magnified the greatness of the departed worthies. Finally, divine worship was addressed to some of them. This theory has been revived, in our own day, by Herbert Spencer.

It is very probable that many of the gods and goddesses of paganism owe their deification to such a procedure

[1] Const: Dei Filius. Cap. i. [2] See Statius: Thebais, iii. 661.

But, assuming that this is true, we are still without any light on the question at issue. We have to find out the root of that sentiment which prompted the pagan to erect dead men and women into objects of religious worship. Before we can propose anything as an object of religious worship, we must have already conceived the religious sentiment.

The theories of religion propounded by Kant, Fichte, and Schelling are so bound up with their philosophical system, that an examination of them would involve a criticism of the latter, in detail, a work which lies outside the scope of this dissertation. It will be sufficient for our purpose to examine these theories which have been advocated more recently among our own thinkers.

The opinion of Max Müller, and its inherent defect, have been already referred to in the consideration of his definition. He held that religion arises from man's perception of the infinite, or, to be more accurate, the indefinite. When we perceive any finite object we perceive at the same time, indirectly, the indefinite which lies outside it; the limited finite suggests that which lies outside all limit. The horizon suggests a vague indefinite beyond. If man finds himself in presence of phenomena too extensive in their nature, or not sufficiently manifested, to be apprehended by the senses, there arises in the mind a vague sense of mystery and perception of the infinite. The river comes from an unknown source, the majestic mountain, and in a stronger degree, winds, clouds, the celestial bodies, evoke in the mind of man a sentiment of awe, and convince him of the existence of an infinite being beyond the reach of sense.

"In all these percepts the infinite preponderates over the finite." In these perceptions of the infinite lies the germ of religion. The vaster objects and phenomena, winds, clouds, sun, moon, and stars, give rise to the great nature gods. Those which are more within the grasp of

sense, yet are not thoroughly seized by it, suggested the minor supernatural beings, such as wood spirits and nymphs. Max Müller falls back on philology to support his view. With the Ancient Iranians, "Aditi, the ancient god or goddess, is in reality, the earliest name to express the infinite; not the infinite as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible infinite, visible to the naked eye, the endless space beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky. That was called the Aditi, the unbounded, one might almost say, but for fear of misunderstandings, the Absolute."[1]

What reason have we to suppose that the primitive mind, on looking out at the sun or moon or any vast phenomena of nature, conceives a religious impression of the infinite? Curiosity, wonder, awe, if you will, arise from such contemplation. But there is no assurance except that offered by Max Müller, that from such feelings alone will arise religion. From such perceptions there is a suggestion of the infinite. But this feeling of the indefinite is not so near that of the infinite as is the mathematical conception of an infinite series, yet the latter does not awake in the mathematician's consciousness any feeling even remotely suggestive of the religious. Indefinite space, indefinite force, are still force and space. Our author implies that, on perceiving such infinites, or indefinites, the mind reads into them a personality. But his theory fails to tell how and why the mind does assume a personality behind phenomena. And this is precisely the important question. To ask what is the origin of religion is equivalent to inquiring how man comes to believe in a personality behind the visible effects of nature. The attempt which Max Müller makes in the *Gifford Lectures*, to explain the introduction of this element is a virtual abandonment of his own for another theory.

The theory of Herbert Spencer, popularly known as the

[1] See Natural Religion, pp., 188, 189.

"Ghost Theory" has gained wide acceptance. It is worked out laboriously in his *Sociology*. Other writers have made some minor modifications in it without departing from the main lines of Spencer. According to him, the religious feeling in man was first evoked in the form of respect paid to ancestors; and to this root all forms of religion are traceable. From the experience in himself, and by observing in others the phenomena of sleep, dreams, epilepsy, etc., the savage came to believe in a "double" or other self. (Ch. X.) In these experiences after an interval the man returns to himself. But there is one condition of apparent sleep from which the man never returns at all—he is dead. Soon the belief grows that no return from this condition could be expected till the end of all things. (Ch. XII.) The idea of the substantial self and the other self assumed, by degrees, a strong contrast. The second self, originally conceived as equally substantial with the other, grows, step by step, less so. Now it is semi-solid, now it is ethereal. And this stage finally reached is one in which there ceases to be ascribed any of the properties by which we know existence. (Ch. XIII.) Gradually the idea of another world in which the departed lives, is evolved. (Ch. XV.) Powers of intervention in the affairs of the living come to be ascribed to the inhabitants of the spirit world (Ch. XVI–XVIII), from which belief naturally springs a policy of pacifying them, if angry, and pleasing them, if friendly. Thence arise the practices of a cult, funereal rites, reverence and worship, veneration of sacred places, altars, temples, and various religious observances. Sacrifices to the dead lead to sacrifice to their relics, or representations of the departed; thus idolatry and fetichism develop out of ancestor worship. (Ch. XXI.) The other self of the dead ancestor was sometimes supposed to take up its abode in an animal; various animals, too, found in caves used for burial, were taken for departed souls. "Bats and owls are

conceived to be winged spirits, and from them arises the idea of devils and angels." Thus animal worship is introduced. The effect of intoxicating liquors and vegetable drugs is ascribed to a possessing spirit; then the plant from which these products are obtained comes to be worshipped. An ancestor called by the name of some plant or animal comes, by misapprehension of metaphor, to be identified with the plant or animal. Again, tribes that have come out of regions where some particular plant or tree abounded, change the legend of emergence from such plants or trees into a legend of descent from them.

Nature worship, too, Mr. Spencer says, is but a form of ancestor worship. "Partly by confounding the parentage of the race with a conspicuous object marking the natal region of the race, partly by literal interpretation of birth-names, and partly by literal interpretation of names given in eulogy, there have been produced beliefs in descents from mountains, from the sea, from the dawn, from animals which have become constellations, and from persons once on earth who now appear as moon and sun; implicitly believing the statements of forefathers, the savage and the semi-civilized have been compelled grotesquely to combine natural powers with human attributes and histories, and have thus been led into the strange customs of propitiating these great terrestrial and celestial objects by such offerings of goods as they habitually made to other ancestors." (S. 193.) Other duties have arisen by "simple idealization, and expansion of human personalities." Remarkable persons regarded with awe during life are regarded with increased awe after death, and the propitiation of such ghosts, becoming greater than the propitiation of ghosts which are less feared, develops into an established worship.

"There is no exception then," concludes Mr. Spencer, "using the phrase ancestor worship in its broadest sense, as comprehending all worship of the dead, be they of the

same blood or not, we conclude that ancestor worship is the root of every religion." (S. 209.)

Such is the famous ghost theory which has been widely hailed as the only satisfactory and proven account of the origin of religions. It is frequently found stated, not as a mere theory, but as an indisputable truth.[1] Evolutionists profess an intimacy with savage psychology which enables them to trace accurately every process that has taken place in the consciousness of primeval man, whose era is separated from ours, says Mr. Spencer, by a stretch of time, compared to which that of twenty thousand years seems relatively small. During this immense period human nature was, according to the basic principles of evolutionary philosophy, undergoing constant modification. Now, when we keep these two postulates in view, continual change, and an incalculably long period during which this modification is going on, there is grave reason for questioning the accuracy of any presentation which professes to set forth the condition of primeval man. When, furthermore, we remember the extreme difficulty of psychological analysis, when it is applied to our own consciousness, or to the investigation of mental phenomena among persons, in the same stage of development, and placed in the same environment as ourselves, then the accuracy with which evolutionists trace the genesis of sentiments and ideas in the consciousness of the primeval savage is nothing short of astounding. The difficulties which even the best equipped enquirers meet in their endeavors to reach the religious notions of savages and primitive peoples are frequently almost insurmountable; years of constant intercourse have sometimes been needed before any accurate knowledge could be obtained. Yet here we have a full explanation of all the religions of all

[1] For an example of the fearless dogmatism with which theories are laid down as established science, see an article entitled The Moral Standard, in *Appleton's Popular Science Monthly*, November, 1896.

the men that ever existed upon earth. The origin of the most elementary ideas is laid bare; their formation in the savage consciousness is traced step by step with the same accuracy as the anatomist follows a muscle to its point of insertion. Forms of religions differing widely in their characteristics, and almost innumerable in their varieties, are, by irresistible synthesis, all reduced to one common form. And what are the proofs offered in support of this view? The method by which it has been reached is clearly discerned through the pages of Spencer. In his mind ancestor worship is settled upon as the origin of all religion. Then in what bears an outward resemblance to the inductive process, but which is really an *a priori* proceeding, facts which tell for the theory are carefully selected; all others, and they are numerous, are completely ignored. Fanciful explanations of phenomena are offered; gratuitous surmises are stated as probabilities; probabilities are soon elevated to the dignity of facts, and, from a very narrow range of facts, many of which are obtained in the above manner, the most sweeping general conclusions are deduced.

We are shown, for example, that it is quite possible that a savage would confuse the metaphorical with the literal signification of some name; and then we are asked to believe that, therefore, men everywhere did commit this error, and in consequence, worshipped animals, trees, mountains, sun and moon, under the impression that these things were their ancestors. Savages of to-day, and savages of a very low type, use metaphorical language—indeed most of their language is metaphorical—without falling into any such blunders as the ghost theory implies. It is quite possible that, in isolated instances, some men may have fallen into the belief that they were descended from the sun or moon, a bull, or a lion. But the ghost theory supposes that such mistakes took place not in isolated instances, but as a normal occurrence. A good

example, of the ease with which Spencer glides from the hypothetical to the categorical appears in the chapter on *Plant Worship*,—"There," he says, after pointing out some names, "we have kinds of names, which, misunderstood in after times, may initiate belief in the human ancestry not only of plants and animals, but of other things." [1] Then a few paragraphs further he writes: "Plant worship, then, like the worship of idols is an aberrant species of ancestor worship." [2] On reasoning of this kind is the entire theory built. When any facts admit an interpretation favorable to his view, Mr. Spencer ignores every other, though others exist which have just as much plausibility as the one which favors him; and a conjecture becomes a truth. An illustration of the kind of premises on which inductions are built occurs in the attempt to show that the religious tribes ascribing their origin to native gods must have been invariably a form of ancestor worship. The numerous traditions among tribes and people ascribing their descent to such gods conceived under highly anthropomorphic characteristics, may frequently have arisen from that spirit of vanity, so common among all peoples, of enhancing their own importance by ascribing a lofty origin to their race. History and contemporary life afford evidence that this impulse is widely prevalent. The Chinese monarch is the Son of Heaven. Humorists have observed the impossibility of reconciling with the capacity of the *Mayflower* and the laws regulating the growth of population, the numbers of claims set up amongst ourselves to the honor of descent from the Pilgrim Fathers.

Another objection urged to the theory is that it does not explain the existence almost everywhere of goddesses. Ancestor worship sprung up, according to Spencer, because the savage cherished the memory of chiefs and individuals, who during life had displayed qualities

[1] Op. cit., Vol. I., p. 357. [2] Ib., p. 359.

that rendered them conspicuous in the rude struggle for existence. Women, who received scarcely any consideration during life were relegated to complete oblivion after death Yet we find the worship of female deities a widespread phenomenon.[1]

The whole view rests on a selection of facts so obviously one-sided, and an interpretation so arbitrary that it finds no supporters to-day among scientific investigators in the field of religion. Its weaknesses have been exposed by Lang,[2] A. Réville,[3] Goblet d'Alviella, and many others.

The desire of applying the principles of evolution to every phase of human life has given rise to many attempts at tracing, in religious growth, a systematic development from the simple to the more complex and perfect. Advocates of this view differ among themselves as to the precise order in which the various forms, from the lowest fetichism up to Christianity, are to be placed. The immense variety of facts which embody the religious manifestation, the frequent mingling of so many different forms in one religion at different periods of its history, and, in another, of incongruous elements found side by side, enables a theorist who will carefully cull out all the facts which fall in with his view, and will shut his eyes to the others, to put together a mosaic which will spell out the desired conclusion. And in such investigations the facility with which savage psychology may be manipulated contributes materially to a satisfactory result. The method of procedure has been described by Max Müller: "The theorist begins by assuming that all men were originally savages, or, to use a milder term, children. Therefore if we wish to study the origin of religion, we

[1] See Tylor, op. cit., Vol. I., pp. 322, 326 ff., 271.

[2] The Making of Religion. For a good illustration of the value of Spencer's authorities, see p. 210 and note.

[3] Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, Vol. XIV., pp. 95–110. Ibid., Vol. I., p. 1 ff. See Jevons. Introduction to the History of Religion, p. 197. Wundt, Ethics. 1. The Gods as Moral Ideas, pp. 78 ff.

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must study children and savages. Now at the present moment some savages in Africa, Australia and elsewhere are supposed to be fetich worshippers and nothing else. Therefore, we are assured that, five or ten thousand years ago, religion must have begun with a worship of fetiches, —that is, of stones, and shells, and sticks and other inanimate objects. Again, children are very apt, not only to beat their dolls, but even to punish a chair or a table, if they have hurt themselves against it. This shows that they ascribe life and personality—nay, something like human nature, to inanimate objects. Hence we are told that savages would naturally do the same, or have actually done the same, from the earliest times to the present day. A savage is, in fact, the most obliging creature, for he does everything that any anthropologist wishes him to do. But, even then, the question of all questions: why he does what he is supposed to do, is never asked. We are told that he worships a stone as a god; but how he came to possess the idea of God, and to predicate it of a stone, is called a metaphysical question, of no interest to the student of anthropology—that is, of man."[1] The value of conclusions drawn from such data is estimated as follows by a scholar thoroughly versed in the methods of scientific research in the field of ancient archæology: "The habits of savages without a history are not in themselves evidences which can in any way be depended upon. To take for granted that what the savages now are, perhaps after millenniums of degradation, all other people must have been, and that modes of thought through which they are now passing, have been passed through by others, is a most unscientific assumption. And you will seldom meet with it in any essay or book without also finding proof that the writer did not know how to deal with historical evidence."[2]

[1] Natural Religion, p. 212.

[2] Le Page Renouf: The Religion of Ancient Egypt, Lect. IV.

The theory supported by Sir John Lubbock illustrates this method. He endeavors to trace an evolution of religion from original atheism; starting from that state, the human mind has progressed through the successive stages of fetichism, nature worship, shamanism, idolatry, or anthropomorphism, up to monotheism. In this last stage the deity is recognized as the Creator of nature, and for the first time morality and religion are associated.[1] This theory is entirely at variance with recognized facts. The comparative study of religion proves that no such uniformity has prevailed. Fetichism and idolatry are found together; monotheism has been followed by shamanism, as in China, idolatry and nature worship have blended inextricably together in some religions. Animal worship and a strong expression of monotheism have prevailed concurrently in Egypt. As Max Müller points out,[2] Abraham was a monotheist, whilst his descendant Solomon built temples to Chemosh and Moloch; and descendants of the race in which Upanishad philosophy flourished now worship cows and monkeys.

Various views differing but slightly from one another, all known by the term animism, agree with Spencer's, as to the manner in which the idea of soul was first reached by primitive man. Then, according to these theories, man accounted for all the phenomena of nature by ascribing them to a soul like his own. And from this, as a starting-point, religion developed, in a gradual evolution through intermediate forms to monotheism. Religion is a most complex phenomenon. Various circumstances, internal and external, have been at work to influence the form it assumed among different tribes and peoples. Many of these circumstances, such as customs, traditions, modes of thought, outside influences, must necessarily be unknown to the modern speculator. Even the accuracy of the information which he supposes him-

[1] Origin of Civilization. [2] Origin and Growth, etc., pp. 64–5.

self to have concerning the genesis of contemporary religious notions is often very doubtful. Yet we are asked to accept as correct theories of the origin of religion which rest on no solider ground than the conjectures made from the slenderest materials, by authorities who evince gross misapprehension of the purport and value of doctrines belonging to a religion professed by the greater part of Christendom. While Spencer tells us, with an assurance which never falters, what were the religious sentiments and belief of the men who built Stonehenge, he makes utterly erroneous statements as to what is the doctrine of Christian Ethics upon the difference between right and wrong.[1]

From the universal prevalence of religion in humanity we can clearly conclude that it is congenital to the human mind ; and, consequently, there must be in the mind itself some root from which it springs. But the tendencies of the rational nature are developed by contact with the outside world, and the sequence in which the various concepts and sentiments, with all the complications among them, as life presents them, is subject to as much variation as there are combinations of circumstances which call them forth. Hence, even though a single characteristic of the human mind may be recognized as accounting for the origin of religion in all mankind, there is every reason to forbid our concluding that, in every group of the human race, it evolved in one unvarying line of progress. This factor of life, arising as it does in the activities of the free rational nature, and pertaining to the immaterial side of life, is, like all the other realizations of mind, controlled by laws immeasurably too complex and obscure for us in the present state of psychological science to describe them. To assume that religion is evolved in one straight uncomplicated line of development, corre-

[1] See Data of Ethics, § 45. Also Fiske: Cosmic Philosophy, Vol. II., Pt. III., Chap. V.

sponding to the regularity of the process through which the fœtus passes into the condition of the fully developed animal, is to ignore the very nature of the problem.[1]

If the constructors of origins would only reflect on a few pages of Professor Bowne,[2] into which he has condensed a great deal of truth concerning the prevalence of the fallacy of the universal, the world might be spared an immense number of theories which are a great deal too symmetrical to respond to the evolution of the extremely complicated processes which they profess to explain.

Wundt says of all these explanations of origin: "Any one-sided theory of historical phenomena may be expected, *a priori*, to be inadequate to the complexities of real life, and more especially when the phenomena under consideration are the primitive explanations of the world and of life. Consistency of standpoint on these matters is a late product of scientific reflection."[3] The unity of principle governing religious development belongs not to the mind of primitive races, but to the scientific mind of the nineteenth century.

Without having recourse to psychological analysis of doubtful value, and contested assumptions as to the conditions which surrounded primeval man, we perceive an obvious inherent characteristic of the human mind, common to all stages of development, which is amply sufficient to account for the appearance of religious beliefs and practices. This characteristic is the impulse of ascribing every perceived effect to some cause. It is outside the scope of this inquiry to enter into the question of whether the first manifestation of the religious idea arose spontaneously

[1] In Le Muséon et la Revue des Religions, Mars, 1899 (Louvain), pp. 91 ff., there are some very pertinent remarks directed against the assumption that, with the very imperfect condition of our knowledge concerning the general history of religions and religious developments, a "Science of Religion" is possible to-day.

[2] Theory of Thought and Knowledge, Ch. XI. Borden P. Bowne, New York, 1895.

[3] Op. cit., Vol. II., p. 76.

from a psychological source, or was called into activity by a primitive revelation. We claim that the innate tendency of reason to assume a relationship of cause and effect is sufficient to account for the recognition by man of his dependence on a superior being. A peculiar objection to this explanation is made by Brinton, "This popular view," he says, "seems weak; for not only is the relation of cause to effect a mere assumption, and indeed rejected by exact science; but it dodges the very question at issue, which is to explain why spiritual agencies are imagined as causes of material effects."[1] This remark implies that because the principle of causality will not stand the test of philosophic examination, it cannot have been practically assumed by man in forming a belief in the existence of superior beings. We might just as well argue that because science proves the earth to be a sphere, no savage ever assumed it to be a vast plane. Whatever be the opinion entertained of its metaphysical value, men in every-day life assume the principle of causality to be true. When they witness an effect they invariably believe it originates from some cause; this universal practical recognition of the notion is enough for our purpose. It is amusing to find that after having thus rejected causality as the idea originating religion, Brinton reverts to the same principle himself: "This universal postulate, the psychic origin of all religious thought, is the recognition, or if you please the assumption that conscious volition is the ultimate source of all force. It is the belief that behind the sensuous, phenomenal world, distinct from it, giving it form, existence and activity, lies the ultimate, invisible, immeasurable power of mind, of conscious will, of Intelligence, analogous in some way to our own; and—mark this essential corollary—that man is in communication with it."[2] This explana-

[1] Religions of Primitive People, p. 45.

[2] Op. cit., p. 47. See also Fiske: Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy, Vol. I., Chap. VII.

tion evidently falls back upon the notion of causality, specifying a causality of a particular kind, volition. And in postulating this restricted notion of causality Brinton makes an essential of the simplest form of religious consciousness something belonging to it only after reflection has been busy with elementary notions.

Those who require as an antecedent to any religious belief, however crude, some notion of a soul, or a recognition that conscious volition is the source of all things complicate the problem unnecessarily. Man, in whatever stage of development his mind may be, from the very lowest grade of rational beings to the idealistic philosopher, is naturally prompted to look for a cause of any effect in the world of phenomena. Indeed evolutionists might have remembered that the lower animals display a very similar tendency; if a dog is struck with a stone he will look around to see whence it came, and will very often give proof that he has fixed the responsibility. Furthermore, man necessarily interprets everything in terms of his own experience: and, accustomed to find himself and other living beings the causes of results which he witnesses, is led to assume similar causes behind other effects. The striking phenomena of nature, so evident to him, and exerting over his fortunes immense influence for welfare or injury, the rising and setting of the Sun, changes of the Moon, beneficent rain, destructive storms, floods, he would naturally ascribe to some powerful being. By another impulse equally natural he would assume such a being to be a person like himself. Thus, even though he had no preliminary idea of a soul, and had not yet proceeded far enough in philosophical abstraction to recognize conscious will as the spring of his own activity, he would easily reach the belief in the existence of mighty personalities exercising upon his fate influence which he could not control. This dependence of his well-being upon them being so evident, he would be prompted

to enlist their favor or avert their anger by means similar to those which he would employ for like purposes in the case of his fellow-man; hence a belief in such beings would naturally lead to supplications, offerings, sacrifices, and other rites of religion.

It is only the more than maternal attachment which a favorite theory so often inspires in the bosom of its inventor that explains why any one should set aside this obvious manner of accounting for the rise of religion, in order to weave some theory which is but a tissue of improbabilities loosely connected by the occasional introduction of facts. This tendency to ascribe personality such as man's own to the unknown cause, not alone will account for the rise, but is also known to be the cause of much of the debasement of religion. This explanation of the psychological origin of religion is sometimes sneered at because it is said to assume that a savage is in full possession of a number of metaphysical notions, and capable of constructing what is called the argument from design. But such imputations are not applicable to the foregoing explanation. It has nothing to do with a "structure of syllogisms, by which isolated logical acrobats climb to some abstract propositions asserting the existence of a final cause." Some theistic writers, indeed, have argued in a line which leaves them open to criticism.[1] They seem to imply that man, in whatever stage of rational development he may find himself, applying his reason to the world around him, will easily detect a universal order; and by logically following, link by link, the chain of cause and effect, will come to the knowledge of the First Cause upon which all others depend.

It is, we know, within the powers of human reason, to rise from a knowledge of the visible creation to that of the invisible Creator. St. Paul upbraided the enlightened men of his time with having failed to make the induction.

[1] See Van den Gheyn: Religion, son Origine, et sa Definition.

But one thing is to say that it is within the province of reason to reach this truth; another, to maintain that all men, whatever may be their intellectual development, are actually capable of it. If it were within the reach of all, a great many minds in the course of time should have reached, by the light of reason alone, a knowledge of the Unity of God. Yet, as far as we know, very few, and these few situated in particularly favorable circumstances, succeeded in attaining knowledge of this truth.

At a very early stage, man begins to inquire into the causes of things; an intelligent child will put metaphysical questions, the solution of which has been the tilting-ground of philosophers since the days of Anaximenes. There is a constant impulse to project our mental vision beyond the bounds of space and time: "Our intellect, in the act of understanding," says St. Thomas, "is extended towards the infinite, as we see by the fact that when finite quantity is expressed our intellect can always think of an addition thereto."[1] It was not necessary for Max Müller to imagine the existence of a special sense to account for the mind's tendency towards the infinite. Inclined naturally towards investigation, holding by innate conviction to the principle of causality, reason, after having acquired some facility in reflection and ratiocination, on reading the order, harmony, power, and majesty expressed in the universe, may arrive at a monotheistic conception of God. The germ of this idea lies in the mind of man, however contracted and rudimentary the state of his mental powers; but, arrested by unfavorable conditions, objective and subjective, this germ may result in nothing more than the abortive, distorted, sometimes atrocious and revolting, notions of the Deity so common in the lower religions.

Religion, then, and morality are two universal characteristics of man, springing both from the constitution of the rational nature. Cancel in human life all that be-

[1] Contra Gentiles, I. 43.

longs to these two forces, and all that distinguishes man from the lower animals disappears. Two phenomena, however, arising even from a common source, may be concomitant without standing in any other relation to each other; and, again, if they do bear to each other a relation of dependence, such relation may be essential, or merely an accidental condition of some particular time, or environment. That for the greater part of mankind religion and morality have been intimately connected nobody denies. But we are told by our modern philosophers that this connection is not necessary; it is transitory, belonging to certain phases of human development. Intellectual progress, before which the pretensions of religion to control human activity is rapidly vanishing, has reached the assurance that, though religion be wiped out altogether, or at least deprived of all control over our conduct, morality, formally seated on its own rational or instinctive basis, may view with composure the disappearance of an influence, which, useful, perhaps, at a certain stage, has frequently been a pernicious ally, and is now a superfluous aid. Here we touch the question which, in the present stage of thought, perplexs many minds: if morality can flourish independently of all religious reference, the tendency to ignore religion altogether cannot prove injurious to progress and welfare. If, on the other hand, morality has no sure and abiding foundation, unless in the religious soil, then the whole drift of Positivism and Agnosticism is deeply injurious to the first interests of the race; and in the irrepressible tendency of sound reason to assert the claims of whatever is essential to our moral nature, we have the assurance that upon Positivism and Agnosticism is written the curse of Reuben: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not prevail."

An answer to the problem concerning the nature of the relation between morality and religion may be sought by two different roads. The religious beliefs of mankind

may be examined in order to learn if those who professed them, brought them to bear upon conduct, by supplying a rule of action, or a sanction for the distinction between moral good and evil. Or an analysis may be made of the various elements of the moral life, with a view to determine whether the realization of morality does or does not drive us logically to admit a Supreme Lawgiver, to whom we owe obedience. We shall seek the solution by both paths.

A perfect inductive process would require an examination of all the forms of religion that ever have existed; but this is neither feasible nor necessary. In any inductive search a large number of cases, ranging over the entire field, representing all the different phases of the subject in all sorts of conditions, is considered sufficient to furnish a reliable conclusion. In the subject with which we are dealing data covering the entire field are at our disposal. The great religions of the world, professed by nations and tribes, differing profoundly in mental characteristics, sometimes widely separated from one another in time and place, and including in their folds the vast majority of mankind, show, in their records, how these countless millions have regarded the enigma of life. Two of the religions may be left out of the inquiry, for their position is universally known: the Hebrews looked upon their moral code as part of the religion revealed to them by the Almighty; and the ethical character of Christianity is so obvious that no space need be devoted to it. Its bearing on morals will be glanced at in a subsequent chapter. The religions of Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, India, Persia, Greece and Rome suggest themselves as specially worthy of attention on account of their antiquity, their wide extent and long duration, as well as the important place which these peoples play in human history. Besides, the knowledge which we possess of them is ample enough to afford solid ground for a judgment

upon them. Of some other religions, such as that of Phœnicia, we have but imperfect fragmentary accounts; a discussion of them would throw no additional light on the subject of inquiry. Mahometanism, of comparatively recent origin, is deserving of notice, as one of the great religions of the world. It embraces among its believers many millions of different races. Islam is the creed of the Arab, whose mode of life and thought to-day varies but little from that of his ancestors in the days when Eliphaz and Baldad brought to Job their scant stock of consolation. It is the religion of the political successors of Constantine; and it is professed by African negroes, and natives of the Pacific Islands.

The barbarian races, whose descendants form the nations of modern civilization, left but little record behind of their religious convictions; yet what does remain may contribute a link in the chain of universal testimony. If we believe evolutionary scientists, the modern savage will tell us truly of the relation in which morality and religion stood to each other in the minds, not alone of the myriads of uncivilized men who, since the dawn of history, have vanished from the earth without leaving a trace of their existence, but of generations who had passed away before the Aryan had crossed the Pamirs. Even though we are inclined to play the rôle of doubting Thomas, and deny to the savage such plenary powers of representation, we must at least accept him as a competent witness to the tendency of the human mind when reduced to the lowest state of degradation consistent with rationality.

Our review, then, will embrace religions representing all the primitive races of mankind. It will comprise every stage of human culture, from that of the early Asiatic nomad, up to those in which flourished the mystic speculations of the Upanishads, and the sublime philosophy of Hellas. Every form of religion, lying between the worship of Buddai, whom the Australian Bushman

propitiates with a little honey, and Christianity will be represented. All these religions, in the aggregate, cover, if not completely, at least representatively, the entire field of human existence. And any conclusions following from an induction so wide as to be practically universal has a legitimate title to be regarded as scientific.

It is outside our purpose to give any complete outline, however summary, of these religions. Most of them are of a complex nature, full of incongruous and contradictory elements; and, with the exception of Mahometanism, all have in the course of their history been changed by accretions from without, or disintegrations from within. Their tenets shall be examined solely with a view to reaching their ethical character. This character shall be sought either in the Sacred Books themselves, where such a literature exists, or in the works of scholars of acknowledged authority in their special departments.

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PART II.—HISTORICAL.

CHAPTER I.

ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA.

THE success with which a host of scholars have, during the past fifty years, labored in bringing to light the meaning of the inscriptions and representations preserved in the monuments belonging to the ancient races who flourished along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, from a period dating back to about four thousand years before our era, gives us an immense amount of data concerning the religion of these peoples. Although many differences mark off the religions of the successive monarchies from each other, yet all are related by a close community of ideas; and for our purpose all may be here considered together.

Polytheism, arising largely from nature worship, was the universal religion. The pantheon was a most populous one. Various chief gods were given pre-eminence, at different periods and in different parts of the land. The ascendency of one branch of the race over the other modified the worship, and introduced new names among the list of deities, without, however, changing the essential features of the religion. Besides the chief gods, a very large number of minor deities, whose veneration was usually restricted to particular cities or districts, received special homage. "What," says Maspéro, "must have been the total of the subordinate genii, when towards the ninth century before our era, the official census of the in-

visible beings stated the number of the great gods in heaven and earth to be sixty thousand."[1] Idol worship prevailed; the spirit of the god being supposed to dwell in the statue, as the double in the Egyptian idol.[2]

One or another god is assigned the place of pre-eminence; frequently the language used in addressing him lends itself somewhat to a monotheistic interpretation. Elsewhere the divinity is addressed without any individual designation. But there is nowhere anything really approaching closely to a conception of One Supreme God.[3]

The entire life of the people was closely bound up with their religion; this inspired their literature, presided over the administration of law, and the practice of medicine. The welfare of the state and its triumph over its enemies depended upon the continued favor of the protecting deity. Sacrifice and prayer, ever the great elements of worship, are prominent. Animals of various kinds, grain, fruits, wine, and oil were the materials offered; nowhere is there any trace of the practice of human sacrifices. In the worship of Ishtar revolting immoralities were part of the rites, as was observed by Herodotus.[4] Sacrificial worship was celebrated on a lavish scale.—"The festivals assigned to the local god and his colleagues, together with the acts of praise in which the whole nation joined," says Maspéro, "such as that of the New Year, required an abundance of extravagant sacrifices, in which the blood of victims flowed like water. Days of sorrow and mourning alternated with days of joy, during which the people and the nobility gave themselves up to severe fasting and acts of penitence."

The belief that moral conduct is the indispensable means of pleasing the divinity is expressed throughout

[1] The Dawn of Civilization, p. 636. [2] Ib., p. 630.

[3] See Jastrow, p. 319. Maspéro, p. 643. The titles of works referred to in the Historical Part are given at the end of the different chapters,

[4] Ib., pp.. 475–477, 485.

the entire literature, in accents of the profoundest conviction. With this recognition or responsibility towards the gods, goes a lively sense of sin, and a conviction that all temporal evil, disease, and misfortune come from the deity as chastisements for faults.

In times of distress the people turn to heaven, in order, by a manifestation of penitential sorrow, and with heartfelt prayer, to obtain pardon for their transgressions, from the divinity who loves righteousness and hates evil. One class of prayers, or hymns, which were consecrated to the expression of sorrow for sin, and the invocation of forgiveness, reflects these sentiments, in a vein so strongly approaching to the spirit of the penitential psalms of the Old Testament, that they have received from scholars the same designation. Everywhere in them abound expressions of the sense of guilt, the recognition of the wickedness of sin, its hatefulness to the gods, and the belief that to the anger of the divinity aroused by it are to be attributed the misfortunes of life. The spirit of the following pervades all:

"Lord, my sins are many, great are my misdeeds! O my God, my sins are many, great are my misdeeds!—I have committed faults and I know them not, I have committed sin and I know it not. I have fed upon misdeeds and I know them not, I have walked in omissions and I know them not.—The Lord, in the anger of his heart, he hath stricken me,—the God in the wrath of his heart hath abandoned me.—Ishtar is enraged against me, and has treated me harshly." "Lord, reject not thy servant,—And if he is hurled into the roaring waters, stretch to him thy hand;—the sins I have committed, have mercy upon them,—the misdeeds I have committed, scatter them to the winds;—and my numerous faults, tear them to pieces, like a garment." [1]

Another hymn, addressed by King Ashurnasibal to

[1] Records of the Past, 1st Series, Vol. VII., pp. 151 ff.

Ishtar, adores her as the goddess of righteousness, who regulates the affairs, and listens to the prayers of men :—

"To the daughter of Sin, the twin sister of Shamash, ruling over all kingdoms, who issues decrees, the goddess of the universe. To the lady of heaven and earth, who receives prayers, who hearkens to the petition, who accepts blessing, to the merciful goddess who loves righteousness. Look upon me, O lady, so that through thy turning towards me the heart of thy servant may become strong. Let thy whole heart be strong towards me, make my disease come forth and remove my sins, let thy mouth, O lady proclaim forgiveness." [1]

In other hymns the idea of the divinity as judge of mankind is clearly expressed. In one addressed to Shamash, we find the lines :—

"The law of nature dost thou direct, eternally just in the heavens art thou, of faithful judgment towards all the world art thou. Thou knowest what is right, thou knowest what is wrong. O Shamash! supreme judge of heaven and earth art thou." [2] In a prayer addressed to Marduk by Nebuchadnezzar, on his accession to the throne, the Divinity is called the Source of all power, merciful and loving towards man, who guides men in the path of righteousness which it behooves them to follow :—

"O Eternal Ruler, Lord of the Universe! Grant that the name of the King whom thou lovest, whose name thou hast mentioned, may flourish as seems good to thee. Guide him on the right path. I am the ruler who obeys thee, the creation of thy hand. It is thou who hast created me, and thou who hast entrusted to me sovereignty over mankind. According to thy mercy, O Lord, which thou bestowest upon all, cause me to love thy supreme rule. Implant the fear of the divinity in my heart, grant to me whatever may seem good before thee. Since it is thou dost control my life." [3]

[1] Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 325–6. [2] Ib., pp. 300, 301. [3] Ib., p. 296.

Quotations might be multiplied illustrating the prevalence of the conviction that good is pleasing to the Divinity, and evil conduct sin,—and that punishment for vice and reward for virtue are meted out by the Deity, in justice tempered with mercy.

The standard of morality which was enforced by this divine sanction agrees in the main features with that which is to be found almost everywhere among the ancient religions. Fear and love of the gods is inculcated. Adultery, injustice in dealing, untruthfulness, are forbidden. Woman's position was not unworthy, though polygamy prevailed. Divorce was not permitted without cause; slavery prevailed, but the condition of the slave seems to have been much better than among other people.[1]

The belief in an existence after death prevailed, but the indications as to the nature of the subsequent state are unsatisfactory. The kingdom of the dead was conceived as a land of gloom and misery from whose bourne no traveller returned. Over this region ruled the dread goddess Allatu, with whom was sometimes associated her consort Nergal. In the epic of Gilgamesh, the descent of Ishtar into this kingdom is described at great length; and the dreary conceptions which existed as to the future life are incidentally pictured. Nowhere is there any distinct recognition of the idea that in the next world, a different fate awaits the good and the wicked. Whilst the Babylonians confidently believed, as we have seen, that in this life a divine sanction is attached to the moral law, this temporal sanction seems to have occupied all their thoughts to the exclusion of any one that might come into force in the life to come.

Yet there are some texts which lend themselves to an interpretation bearing out Rawlinson's opinion that there was a belief in a different fate for the wicked and for the

[1] See Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 694–5.

good.[1] This is contrary to the opinion of Lenormant; and Jastrow asserts that: "There is nothing to show that among the ancient Babylonians, either among the populace or in the schools, a belief arose in a 'paradise' whither privileged persons were transported after death, nor is any distinction made by them between the good and the bad, so far as the future habitation is concerned. All mankind, kings and subjects, go to Aralu. Those who have obtained the good-will of the gods receive their reward in this world, by a life of happiness and of good health."[2] Maspéro's view coincides with the latter; yet he makes the partial admission that many rebelled against the injustice of the idea which assigned one and the same fate, without discrimination, to the coward and the hero killed on the battle-field, to the tyrant and the mild ruler of his people, to the wicked and the righteous; these therefore supposed that the gods made distinction.[3] It is, however, unnecessary to press the controversy to a decided conclusion; for the evidence which is admitted by all amply establishes the fact that the recognition of a divine sanction for conduct was a fundamental tenet of the Babylonian and Assyrian religion, accompanied by a profound sense of sin, and of the efficacy of prayer and penitential works towards obtaining pardon from the divinity.

TEXTS.

Large collections of Assyrian and Babylonian records are in the Louvre and the British Museum. A great many are reproduced in *Records of the Past*, 1st Series, Vols. III., IV.; 2d Series, Vol. II.

Miscellaneous Inscriptions of Western Asia: 5 vols., Rawlinson, V. (London, 1861–1891).

Assyrian and Babylonian Texts: James A. Craig, Leipzig, 1895–97.

[1] Religions of the Ancient World, pp. 62, 63. [2] Op. cit., p. 576.
[3] Op. cit., pp. 697–8.

Documents religieux de l'Assyrie et de Babylonie: Halevey, Paris, 1882.

Many others are found in the Reviews and Periodicals devoted to Oriental Archæology; among which may be mentioned:

Beitrage für Assyriologie.

Proceedings of the American Oriental Society.

Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology.

Recueil des Travaux relatifs à la Philologie et à l'Archéologie Egyptiennes et Assyriennes.

Among the chief works dealing with the history of these countries are:

Geschichte des Alterthums: Max Duncker, Berlin, 1878.

Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient, Vol. IV.: François Lenormant, Paris, 1895.

The Dawn of Civilization: G. Maspéro (Sayce's Edition), New York, 1897.

The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World, Vols. I., III.: G. Rawlinson (4th Edition), London, 1879.

Babylonish-Assyrische Geschichte: C. P. Tiele, Gotha, 1886.

The Origin and Growth of Religion as illustrated by the Religion of the Ancient Babylonians: A. H. Sayce, London, 1887.

La Religion des Anciens Babyloniens et son plus récent historien M. Sayce: Halevey in *Revue de l'histoire des Religions,* Vol. XVII.

Religion of Babylonia and Assyria: Morris Jastrow, Boston, 1898. In this work the subject is treated exhaustively. It embodies the results of the latest labors of specialists, and contains an extensive Bibliography. The author's views on the relations between Chaldean Religion and that of the Old Testament are open to objection.

CHAPTER II.

EGYPT.

THE Egyptian people enjoyed a high civilization and were in possession of an elaborate religious system that was already looked upon as venerable from its antiquity more than three thousand years before the birth of Christ. Though no books have survived to give us any systematic exposition of this religion, yet the extensive monumental and documentary evidences, which for thousands of years have been preserved in the genial climate and dry soil of Egypt and the desert, have, when interpreted by the industry and genius of learned Egyptologists, offered us a knowledge, which, if not conclusive on all points, is abundant on many concerning the nature of the religious views and the moral code as well as the relation between the two entertained by this people. What was the origin of this religion no one can say. It was old when the first pyramid was built, five thousand years ago. Writers with theories about the origin of religions assure us that it sprang from animism or ghost worship or fetichism; and they offer as proof the fact that the savage of to-day believes in ghosts and dreams and spirits presiding over the natural phenomena around him. Profound scholars familiar with all the results of scientific investigation prefer to treat the problem as insoluble.

In its external form this religion was polytheistic. "The Egyptian deities," says Le Page Renouf, "are innumerable. There were countless gods in heaven and below the earth. Every town and village had its local patron. Every month of the year, every day of the

month, every hour of the day and the night, had its presiding divinity, and all these gods had to be propitiated by offerings. I several times made the attempt to draw up an index of the divine names occurring in the texts, but found it necessary to abandon the enterprise." [1]

But along with this polytheism there is found, from the earliest date, a strongly pronounced aspiration towards monotheism. The reconciliation of these two contradictory elements has divided authorities on the subject into opposing camps. Pierret and Emmanuel Rougé, names carrying great weight, hold that monotheism is the original element which gradually became overlaid with polytheism.[2] Maspéro's conclusion is that " the Egyptians naturally tended toward the theory of the divine Oneness ;—in fact, they reached it ; and the monuments show that in the comparatively early times the theologians were busy uniting in a single person the prerogatives which their ancestors had ascribed to many different beings." [3] " The feudal spirit, always alert and jealous, prevented the higher dogma which was dimly apprehended in the temple from triumphing over the whole land." Le Page Renouf, a specialist of at least equal authority, lays great stress on the opinion of Rougé that the monotheistic note is dominant in many of the earlier documents. He cites abundant examples of language where the monotheistic conception of God, as the Self Existent, Supreme Being, the One of One, the only God, is emphatically expressed. His own conclusion is that the gods of the Egyptians were the powers of nature deified as so many manifestations of one Supreme Power and active Intelligence which lay behind them all.[4] But he hesitates to affirm that the Egyptians accepted the

[1] Religion of Egypt, Lec. III., p. 89.

[2] See Conférence sur la Religion des Anciens Egyptiens. Annales de la Philosophie Chretienne, Tom. XX., p. 327. Lenormant, p. 220.

[3] The Dawn of Civilization, p. 152.

[4] Op. cit., p. 127.

words implying the unity of God in the sense which we should admit to be correct; he rather dwells upon the henotheistic ideas which, prevalent in earlier times, are in more evidence in the large number of hymns beginning with the eighteenth dynasty.[1] While authorities are thus divided on their view as to the relationship which existed between these contradictory elements, polytheism and monotheism, they are all agreed that the Egyptian mind was profoundly conscious of a Divinity, eternal, infinite, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, upon whom man is dependent. It held fast to the essential distinction between Right and Wrong, as coming from God, who in a life to come would award to men the retribution which their conduct necessarily entailed.

In a fragment known as the *Maxims of Ptahhoteph*, which is undoubtedly the most ancient piece of writing in the world, for it dates from the age of the first pyramid, while its author must have lived in the still more remote period of the fifth dynasty, God, not this or that god, but God, is spoken of. "The field which the great God hath given thee to till." "If any one beareth himself proudly, he will be humbled by God." "God loveth the obedient and He hateth the disobedient." In a papyrus now at St. Petersburg we find,—"Praised be God for all His gifts." "God knows the wicked; He smites the wicked even unto blood." In another, "In making thy oblation to God beware of what He abhors. Thou shalt make adorations in His name. It is He who granteth genius with endless aptitudes, who magnifieth him who becometh great. The God of the world is in the light above the firmament; His emblems are upon earth; it is to them that worship is rendered daily."[2] The Old Testament contains but few passages in which the idea of the one God is more emphatically expressed.

In the following passage from a later period we have

[1] Le Page Renouf, pp. 226 ff.

[2] Ibid., p. 104.

one of the precepts of the moral law conceived in the same strain and enforced with the same sanction as the corresponding precept of the Decalogue :—" Thou art now come to man's estate ; thou art married and hast a house ; but never do thou forget the painful labor which thy mother endured, nor all the salutary care which she has taken of thee. Take heed lest she have cause to complain of thee, for fear that she should raise her hands to God and He should listen to her prayer." [1] This is the language of monotheism ; if it were consistently used, the religious problem offered by Egypt would be solved. But it is not consistently used. Similar language is addressed, especially in later times, to separate divinities ; a few examples must suffice to illustrate the anomaly. " O Horus of the horizon, there is no other besides like Him, protector of millions, deliverer of hundreds of thousands, the defender of him that calls to him.—Reproach me not with my sins." [2] In a hymn to Osiris, on a tablet in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, he is called " The Lord of Eternity ; the King of the Gods." " The gods recognize the universal law.—He judgeth the world according to His will.—He giveth His commands to men, to the generations present, past and future, to Egyptians and to strangers." [3] Language of similar tenor is used in a hymn addressed to Amon Ra among the collection at Bulaq. " Hail to thee, Amon Ra, Lord of the thrones of the earth, —Lord of all existences, the support of all things.—The One in his works, single among the gods—Maker of men —giving him life—listening to the poor who is in distress ; gentle of heart when one cries to him. Deliverer of the timid man from the violent judging of the poor, the poor and the oppressed. Salutation to thee because thou abidest in us ; adoration because thou hast created us." [4] The opening of another hymn is, " I come to thee, O Lord of the gods, who hast existed from the beginning,

[1] Le Page Renouf, p. 106. [2] Ibid., p. 238. [3] Ibid., 227. [4] Ibid., p. 234.

eternal God who hast made all things that are. Thy name be my protection; prolong my term of life to a good age; may my son be in my place (after me), and may my dignity remain with him and his forever as is done to the righteous who is glorious in the house of his Lord." These and countless other texts found on monuments, walls of temples, sepulchres, and recorded in papyri show that while a polytheistic external form was the normal expression of religion, there was a vague, undefined, haunting perception of a divine unity to which the Egyptians clung from the earliest times.

Some of the quotations already adduced imply the recognition of a divine sanction for morality. So great is the quantity of evidence bearing on this point that if we were to subtract from all the vestiges of Egyptian civilization those parts which testify to the belief in a future existence, in which divine retribution will be meted out to man for the manner in which he observed in this life, the divine law of right and wrong, we should have very little left.

The primary concern of an Egyptian's life, as Lenormant remarks, was the problem of future existence. Man goes into the tomb to await there the day of resurrection, when the soul shall return to the body of the just man, who shall enter upon an everlasting life of happiness. This belief is the explanation of their extraordinary care for the preservation of the body by embalmment, and for the enduring character of the resting-places in which they laid their dead. The most stupendous work of human hands, the pyramids of Egypt, venerable for their antiquity ages before Rome or Athens was built, and destined probably to outlast every other work of human hands on the earth, to-day, are but monuments of the Egyptian's belief in the life to come. Nor was this belief a mere theoretical tenet; it was constantly in view, so that Birch says the idea of a future state was ever present to the Egyptian mind, and

his whole life was one long preparation for death.[1] Nine-tenths of the manuscripts which survive consist of extracts, sometimes of entire chapters from a sacred book known to European scholars as *The Book of the Dead*, which consists chiefly of prayers destined to protect the deceased in his trials beyond the tomb until he should arrive at final bliss. Some of the parts are a ritual of burial services, others prayer used at the consecration of objects laid in the tomb. The entire book was inscribed on some of the tombs of Thebes. Extracts, sometimes whole chapters of it, are found on the papyri and engraved on temples and tombs.[2]

In *The Book of the Dead*, particularly in the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter, there is a mirror in which we can see the conception of morality which prevailed. The everlasting life promised to the just embraces a new existence resembling in a more perfect state earthly life; in that existence the just will enjoy the privileges of ranging over the entire universe, in whatever form they choose to assume. The soul, after passing through the ordeal of justice, will be identified with Osiris and the other divinities. The judgment which awaits the soul is described at great length; pictorial representations of it are found on the papyri and among the monuments. Osiris, the god of justice, is seated on his throne as judge of the dead. The scales are presided over by justice. The heart of the deceased, typical of his moral nature, is placed on one scale, truth is on the other. Horus watches the balance; Tehuti is the recording god. Forty-two other gods, assessors, whose office it is to examine the deceased relative to the forty-two sins against the moral law and their opposite virtues, are in attendance. The soul addresses Osiris and the other attendant divinities,

[1] Egypt from the Earliest Times, p. 46.

[2] See Maspéro, op. cit., p. 188, also Lenormant, Vol. III., Chap. 3, § 3. Bunsen: Egypt's Place in Universal History, Vol. V.

"Hail unto you, great gods of truth! Hail to the great god, Lord of truth and justice! I have come before thee, my master; I have been brought to see thy beauties; I bring unto you truth; I have destroyed sin for you. I have not committed iniquity against men. I have not oppressed the poor; I have not defaulted; I have not committed that which is an abomination to the gods." After this negative profession the soul appeals for mercy, as it had done on entering the hall of judgment. "Hail unto you, ye gods—who live on truth—and feed your hearts upon it before the Lord God, who dwells in the solar disc; deliver the deceased that he may come unto you, he who hath not sinned, who hath neither lied nor done evil, nor committed any crime, who hath not borne false witness, who hath done nought against himself, but who liveth on truth, who feedeth on truth."[1] If the soul is found worthy it passes into the realms of bliss. The punishments of the wicked are recorded at great length. After condemnation the intelligence, which, like all other faculties, has been separated, enters the soul to become the first instrument of punishment, by recalling its former counsels despised and its prayers treated with derision, in fact, to discharge the function which in the Bible is assigned to the worm which dieth not. Physical sufferings of various kinds are added; and if these terrible penalties are not eternal, it is only because, after the lapse of ages, they end in absolute annihilation.[2] Such was the chief and fundamental sanction upon which was reared the code of public and private morality in the most ancient and, in some respects, the most interesting civilization that mankind has known.

The character of this code may be estimated from the extracts already quoted. Not only the great crimes of murder, adultery and unchastity of all kinds, calumny, but all injustice, even forcing a laborer to do more than his

[1] Maspéro, op. cit., pp. 188 ff. [2] Lenormant, op. cit., p. 231.

daily task, not only lying but also exaggeration in speaking, turning a deaf ear to truth and justice, contemptuous and unworthy thoughts of God, chattering and idle words, are considered sufficient to exclude from eternal happiness.[1] The books of Maxims, already referred to, bear similar witness to the code of morality that prevailed. The virtues of duty to parents, respect for property, humility, sobriety, truthfulness and justice are inculcated; while pride, slothfulness and strife are reprobated. Temperance is advocated with an earnestness that indicates, as do many of the surviving records, that total abstinence was far from being universal.

Epitaphs are proverbially unreliable witnesses as to the character of the deceased; but, as Lenormant neatly says, if they do not always show what was the conduct of the dead, they at least indicate what is expected of the living. Egyptian epitaphs reflect the same code as *The Book of the Dead*, and the Maxims; one or two examples out of many available must suffice. Here is one quoted by Renouf[2] from the tablet of Beka, now at Turin: "I was just and true without malice, placing God in my heart, and quick in discerning his will. I have come to the city of those who dwell in eternity." Another, typical of many, as it is an extract from *The Book of the Dead*, is: "I was bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, a refuge to him that was in want, that which I did to him the great God has done to me."[3] Finally, we should not omit another in the great inscription of Miramar; for it expresses succinctly the spirit which animated the Egyptian conception of the moral order as a distinction between right and wrong, emanating from the divine nature. "My heart inclined to the right when I was yet a child, not yet instructed as to the right and good. And what my heart dictated I failed not to

[1] Lenormant, op. cit., Chap. II., Sect. 6. Renouf, pp. 203, 204.
[2] Op. cit., p 76. [3] Ibid., p. 77.

perform. And God rewarded me for this, rejoicing me with happiness which he has granted me for walking in his ways."[1] Thus we find that when the records of this mysterious and far distant past are summoned by modern science to tell how men conceived the relations between morality and religion, they bear witness, in no uncertain voice, to a prevailing belief in an infinite, holy, and true God, governing the universe, the recognition by man of his dependence on God, of an eternal distinction between right and wrong, and of his expectation that after death good and bad, sin and virtue, would receive their reward from God. And while the religion preserved its spirit and vitality the Egyptian seems, on the whole, to have given to these great truths the attention which he is recommended to show to them in *The Lay of the Harper*.[2] "Mind thee of the day when thou too shalt start for the land to which one goeth, to return not thence. Good for thee will have been a good life; therefore be just, and hate iniquity; for he who loveth what is right shall triumph."

The struggle towards monotheism in the Egyptian mind never reached the goal. The tendency to see one God beneath the numerous polytheistic divinities led among the educated classes, not to monotheism but to pantheism. In religious hymns dating from the nineteenth dynasty pantheism is fully expressed.[3] The inscriptions which bear witness to the growth of pantheism, as Renouf, after Naville, points out, cease to reflect any ethical code. With the sense of a personal god, disappears the recognition of that inward essential distinction between right and wrong so plainly evident in *The Book of the Dead*. Of one typical epitaph of this character Renouf says: "There is no allusion to the necessity of a good life, no recommendation to be just and hate ini-

[1] Ibid., p. 78.

[2] Records of the Past, Vol. VI., p. 129. See Renouf, p. 73.

[3] Renouf, p. 240.

quity; no assurance that he who loveth what is just shall triumph. The tablet upon which this strange inscription is found has upon it the figures of several of the Egyptian gods in which it professes faith, but the religion must have already been at its end, when such a text could have been inscribed on a funereal tablet." [1] Pantheism, as it logically should, paved the way to materialism, which finds its expression in the hymns at Dendera in honor of the goddess Hathor. As the divine personality receded out of men's minds, the worship of animals became more and more prevalent. This cult of animals had existed from the earliest times; but it gradually became practically that gross fetich worship which is so scornfully attacked by both heathen and Christian writers. The worship which was carried on in the temples of Hierapolis, Thebes, and Dendera, was no longer one which addressed itself to One Supreme Intelligence, manifested in various divine personages. Of its later forms, when mythology had utterly debased it in creed and rite, it is unnecessary to say more than that its introduction marked a further step in the corruption of religion and morality which took place in imperial Rome. From the religion which inspired such prayers as "O my God and Lord who hast made me and formed me, give me an eye to see and an ear to hear thy glories," [2] it is a far cry to the worship of the goddess whom Juvenal calls the Isiac procuress [3] and whose temples Ovid, in his *Ars Amatoria*,[4] recommends as being a likely place, owing to the influence of the goddess on her female votaries, to provide oneself with a mistress.

SOURCES.

A large collection of important texts is found in *Records of the Past*, Vols. III., IV., VI., VIII. and XII., first series; and in Vols. I. and II., second series. Others are found in Maspéro's

[1] Renouf, p. 253. [2] Ibid., p. 225. [3] Sat. VI. 489. [4] Bk. I. 78.

Les Contes Populaires de l'Egypt ancienne, Paris, 1882 ; many others in the various issues of the *Revue Archéologique* in the *Bibliothéque des Hautes Etudes*. Sharpe's *Inscriptions* is worthy of notice.

The most important document for the study of Egyptian morals, *The Book of the Dead*, is translated into English by Birch, in the fifth volume of Bunsen's *Egypt*. Another authoritative translation is the French one of L. Pierret, *Le Livre des Morts*, Paris, 1880. E. de Rougé's *Etude sur le Rituel Funeraire* (1860), and the introduction to Naville's edition of the texts are valuable.

Among the general works on Egypt, which treat at considerable length of the religion may be mentioned :—

Egypt's Place in Universal History : C. K. J. Bunsen. Translated by Cotrell, 1867.

Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient : Lenormant, Paris, 1883. Vol. III., Chap. 3. *The Dawn of Civilization :* G. Maspéro, New York, 1897.

History of Ancient Egypt : G. Rawlinson, London, 1881.

The Manner and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians : W. Wilkinson. Birch's edition, 1878.

Works dealing specially with the religion :—

Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, as illustrated by the Religion of Ancient Egypt : Le Page Renouf, London, 1884.

Religions of the Ancient World : G. Rawlinson, London, 1882.

Religion und Mythologie des Alten Egypter : H. Brugsh, 1888.

Conférence sur la Religion des Anciens Egyptiens : E. de Rougé, in *Annales de la Philosophie Chrétienne*, Tom. XX.

Essai sur la Mythologie Égyptiènne ; P. Pierret, Paris, 1879.

Essai sur l'Évolution Historique et Philosophique des Idées Morales dans l'Égypte Ancienne : E. Amélineau, Paris, 1895.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA.

§ 1. *Vedism.*

AMONG the ancient religions which have left to us documentary evidence of their character one of the most interesting is that of the Vedas,—the sacred books belonging to the Indian branch of the ancient Aryan people. After separating from the common stock, they crossed the Himalayas, and settled along the Indus. The date of this migration is a matter of conjecture. The literature which survives dates back to about two thousand or fifteen hundred years before our era, though it was not committed to writing earlier than about the ninth century B. C.[1] Barth's classification of the different phases of religion in India is generally accepted: he divides them into Vedism, Elder Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Younger Brahmanism, or Hinduism. The latter is a corruption of early Brahmanism, mingled with innumerable importations from without, and assuming various forms, through which it is often difficult to trace the surviving elements of the ancient religion. Jainism, which strongly resembles Buddhism, is the religion of a comparatively small number of people, and claims no particular attention. The antiquity of Vedism, and the wide extent of Brahmanism and Buddhism make these three forms of religion deserving of examination.

The religion of the Vedas is a compound of polytheism

[1] The Rig. Veda: Adolf Kaegi. Trans. Arrowsmith, p. 11.

and pantheism, through which runs a constant note of monotheism.[1]

Earth and heaven were represented as the parents of gods and men. Varuna, Indra, Prajapiti, Mitra, are worshipped as supreme. Sometimes they are associated: elsewhere we find to each ascribed the prerogatives of the Supreme Ruler.[2] Each is thought of as specially ruling in his own sphere and, in the mind of his worshippers, is "as good as all the gods." Aditi, eternity, is honored as the friend and sustainer of men, the mother of Varuna and Mitra. Men entreat her for protection and defence, and ask to be freed by her from the debt of sin.[3] The dominion of her children extends over all things; and their protection is given to the just.[4]

> "No right or left, no back or front, Adityas,
> By mortal eyes in you can be distinguished.
> No weariness can dim your eyes, nor slumber;
> Afar your guardianship protects the upright."[5] (2 : 27).

Forgiveness of sins is implored of them :—

> "Forgive, O Aditi, Varuna, Mitra,
> If we in anything have sinned against you.
> Let me attain the realms of peace and brightness,
> Led by your hand in folly or in wisdom."[6] (2 : 27.)

Varuna is the omniscient god who sees into the hearts of men :—

> "Whoever moves or stands, who glides in secret,
> Who seeks a dwelling place, or hastens from it,
> What things two men may plan in secret council,
> A third, King Varuna, perceives it also.
> And all this earth King Varuna possesses,
> His the remotest ends of yon broad heaven.

[1] See Revue de l'histoire des Religions, Vol. I., pp. 262 ff. For the different opinions upon the age of the Vedas, see Hopkins: Religion of India, pp. 3 ff.

[2] Cf. Max Muller: Origin & Growth, etc., Lect. IV. Kaegi, op. cit., pp. 32f.

[3] See Barth, op. cit., p. 26.

[4] Kaegi, op. cit., p. 59, and notes.

[5] Ibid., p. 60.

[6] Ibid., p. 61.

And both the seas in Varuna lie hidden,
But yet the smallest water drop contains him.
What'er exists between the earth and heaven,
Or both beyond, to Varuna lie open."[1] (Atharvaveda.)

Sins of all kinds, of commission and omission, those of the individual himself, even those which have originated from ignorance, and the sins of others are included in prayers for forgiveness. Varuna the just judge is yet tender and merciful to erring mortals.

"If we to any dear and loved companion
Have evil done, to brother or to neighbor,
To our own countryman or to a stranger,
That sin do thou, O Varuna, forgive us." (5, 85, 7.)

"Forgive the wrongs committed by our fathers.
What we ourselves have sinned, in mercy pardon;
My own misdeeds, do thou, O God, take from me,
And for another's sin let me not suffer. (7, 86, 5 & 2, 28, 9.)

"If ever we deceived like cheating players,
If consciously we've erred, or all unconscious,
According to our sin do not thou punish;
Be thou the singer's guardian in thy wisdom."[2] (5, 85, 8 & 7, 88, 6.)

In a few lines Barth has summed up the spirit in which the hymns express the relationship in which men stand toward the Deity. "The connection between man and the gods is conceived (in the hymns) as a very close one. Always and everywhere he feels that he is in their hands, and that all his movements are under their eye. He must be humble, for they are strong; he must be sincere toward them, for they cannot be deceived, nay, he knows that they in turn do not deceive, and that they have a right to require his affection and confidence as a friend, a brother, a father."[3]

Belief in the immortality of the soul finds frequent beautiful expression.[4] Yama, the first man deified, has

[1] Kaegi, p. 65. [2] Ibid., p. 67.
[3] Op. cit., p. 32.
[4] See Max Muller: Chips, etc., Vol. I., pp. 44 ff. Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, Vol. I., pp. 248 ff.

passed through the gates of death, whither all his descendants shall follow him.

"He went before and found a dwelling for us,
A place from which no power can ever bar us,
Whither our fathers all long since have journeyed.
His path leads every earth-born mortal thither."[1] (10, 14, 7, 16, 8.)

The soul of the just is bidden in another hymn, in words that recall vividly the expression found in the Catholic Church's prayers for the departing, to go forth to the future life :—

"Go forth, go forth, upon the path so ancient,
By which our fathers reached their home in heaven.
There Varuna shalt thou behold, and Yama,
The princes both in blessedness eternal.
Enter the band of the propitious fathers."

"Dwelling in blest abodes in bliss with Yama
Join thou thyself to Yama and the fathers ;
Meet thou with thy reward in highest heaven ;
Return to home, free from all imperfection ;
In radiant power gain union with thy body."[2] (10, 14, 7, 10, 8.)

While the man who has led a life of righteousness is deserving of happiness in that realm "where men devout in blessedness are dwelling," those who have followed sinful courses are condemned to darkness.

The moral condition of the people as reflected in the hymns was high. The foundation of the state was laid in the family. Women enjoyed respect ; and marriage was looked upon as an institution of the gods. Benevolence and works of mercy are praised. Frequent allusions to gambling, stealing, robbery, deceitful dealings, show that although the leading principles of the moral law were intelligently understood, yet with this ancient people—as is the case amongst ourselves,—knowledge and practice were not always concurrent.[3]

[1] Kaegi, op. cit., p. 69. [2] Ib., pp. 69 and 70. [3] Ib., p. 14 ff.

There existed among them the notion of a law of righteousness emanating from the Divinity imposing on man the obligation of obedience, which he might or might not fulfil; and in these ideas are implied the conception of sin.[1]

Quotations might be multiplied indefinitely, in which the gods, sometimes Soma and Indra, but more frequently Varuna, are appealed to as the guardians of the moral order; where the hope of immortality and retribution for good and evil are expressed in accents of the deepest conviction. But those adduced abundantly prove that, among this ancient people, a picture of whose religious and moral life has been preserved to us, there prevailed an intense belief in an overruling deity upon whom man depends; and a practical recognition that man's duty towards the deity embraces the observance of the moral law. They looked forward to another life into which their works should follow them, where in happiness or misery, they should reap as they had sown during their early existence.

§ 2. *Brahmanism.*

The transformation of the early Vedic religion into Brahmanism was a gradual process, covering a long period, the various stages of which cannot be accurately traced. Around the Vedas there grew up an immense literature, which Max Müller, whose authority as a linguist is much higher than that which attaches to his name as a philosopher, divides into four strata. After the first period, which saw the systematic arrangement of the Vedic hymns and formulas, came that of the Brahmanas; this period, according to Max Müller, extended from about 800 to 600 B. C. These books treat chiefly of the sacrifice, and, before the end of the period, the philosophic works known as the Upanishads are connected with

[1] Kaegi, p. 14 ff.

them. Subsequently another mass of literature known as the Sutras arose, which contain a great deal of ritual mixed up with observations on almost all kinds of knowledge known to the Brahmans.[1]

The influence of the priestly class gradually becoming supreme imposed on the people an iron system of caste. Varuna, Indra, Agni, and many of the other gods do not disappear; but another conception throws them into the background—Brahma, the Supreme Principle of all things. The genesis of this conception is traced by Rhys Davids as follows:—"When the gods of the Vedas are referred to as being, each one of them, the greatest and best, there was not any real sense of comparison, though the word now seems to imply it. It was simply that the one God, that is to say, the one idea, loomed largest at the time before the mental eye of the poet, and in the explanation of such passages the Brahman commentators carefully avoid all appearances of rivalry. A truer—and what was probably of more importance from the theologian's point of view—a more edifying explanation lay closer to their hands. Already in the Vedas certain of the great souls, the gods, are identified with certain others, and there is even reference to a divinity which, as it were, lay behind them all, and was the basis of their godhead. . . . And the Brahmans gradually elaborated out of such expressions a conception of a single being, out of whom all gods, and all men, and all things had proceeded."[2] The earlier gods are sometimes identified with Brahma, sometimes distinguished from him. . . .[3] "The self divine existent produced all things."[4]

The Brahmans themselves are an emanation from the divine principle, for "the very birth of a Brahmana is an

[1] See Max Müller: Origin and Growth, etc., Lect. III.
[2] Buddhism, Lect. I., Religious Theories in India, etc.
[3] Laws of Manu, XII. 122, 123. (S. B. E., Vol. XXV.)
[4] Ib., I. 4-6.

eternal incarnation of the sacred law, for he is born to (fulfil) the sacred law, and becomes one with Brahma." [1] The fulfilment of the law is the means of reaching eternal bliss and unsurpassable happiness.[2] The spirit of caste exalts the Brahman above all men: "Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brahmana; on account of the excellence of his origin, the Brahmana is entitled to it all . . . other mortals subsist through the benevolence of the Brahmana.[3] The sacred law of the Vedas is the rule of life which the Brahmans must study and practise themselves and teach to others, and in this consists the whole duty of man.[4] In the fulfilment of the law not alone external compliance but the assent of the heart is necessary.[5] The regulations for a Brahman's conduct extend to the most private concerns of life.

A complex system of laws and customs, embracing religious, domestic, social, and political life, alleged to be entirely founded on the Vedas, prevailed; but the Vedic religious notions are profoundly altered. The precepts of the law are a confused medley in which noble thoughts and lofty principles are found side by side with trifles and endless pedantry. The interpretation of the law by a properly-instructed Brahman had supreme legal force.[6] But it seems that there must have been among the emanations from Brahma individuals belonging to the class "that cannot teach, yet will not learn;" for it is laid down that, "the sin of him whom dunces, incarnations of darkness, and unacquainted with the law, instruct in his duty falls, increased a hundred fold, on those who propound it." [7]

The most systematic and representative book of laws, *The Laws of Manu*, offer data for a sufficient view of Brahmanic religion and moral teaching. Brahma, as we

[1] Laws of Manu, I. 98.
[2] II. 9.
[3] Ib., I. 100–101, 93.
[4] Ib., 103, 104.
[5] IV. 45 ff.
[6] XII. 113.
[7] XII. 115.

have already seen, is the Supreme Being from whom the law of conduct emanates.

The moral code, though marred by a confusion of morality and mere legality, and by absurdities inspired by the all-pervading spirit of caste, is, in many respects, noble, and, taken as a whole, praiseworthy. The great infringements of the moral law, murder, adultery, robbery, intemperance, dishonesty of a minor character, lying, are condemned. Various rules of life are prescribed for the different castes: all of which are compendiously summed up by Manu: "Abstention from injuring (creatures), veracity, abstention from unlawfully appropriating (the goods of others), purity, and control of the organs, Manu has declared to be the summary of the law for the four castes."[1]

Woman was held in honor, though entirely subject to her father, her husband, or her brother,[2] but there is found also a decidedly uncomplimentary analysis of the female character.[3] The sanctity of marriage was recognized; though polygamy was permitted.[4]

Violation of the law is a sin against Brahma, from whom the law emanates. Sins may be effaced by penance,[5] sacrifice and prayer. Legal impurities are many, and are frequently constituted by action of the most trivial character.[6] The penances prescribed, especially for faults involving disrespect or injury to the Brahmans, are very severe.[7] If penance sufficient to atone for the faults is not performed the culprit is condemned to re-birth; for the doctrine of metempsychosis is a fundamental tenet of Brahmanism. Everywhere this belief in transmigration is prominent. "In consequence of (many) sinful acts committed with his body, a man becomes (in the next birth) something inanimate; in consequence (of sin) committed

[1] Laws of Manu, X. 63.
[2] Ib., III. 54, 59; Ib., V. 147, 149. [3] Ib., XI. 14 ff. [4] Ib., VIII. 204.
[5] Ib., IV. 243. [6] Ib., 53 ff. [7] Ib., XI. 104 ff.

by speech, a bird, or beast; and in consequence of mental sins, he is re-born in a low caste." The belief in a judgment after death, and an award of bliss or misery, are clearly expressed.—"Another strong body, formed of particles of the five (elements and) destined to suffer the torments (in hell) is produced after death (in the case) of wicked men. When (the evil-doers) by means of that body have suffered there the torments imposed by Yama, (its constituent parts) are united, each according to its class, with those very elements (from which they were taken). He, having suffered for his faults, which are produced by attachment to sensual objects, and which result in misery, approaches, free from stains, these two mighty ones. Those two together examine, without tiring, the merit and the guilt of that (individual soul), united with which it obtains bliss or misery in this world, and the next." [1]

In the later Brahmanic literature, metempsychosis takes a philosophical form, and the conceptions of the divinity become monistic. The chief object of human life is to reach absorption in Atman. Atman is the reality, in antithesis with this world of deceit and illusion. The world and the world soul have emanated from Atman and Maya (illusion). Atman is the unknowable cause of the knowable, itself, however, without cause. "It is the light in which all that is perceived is seen, but there is no light by means of which it can be seen. It is invisible, incomprehensible, without descent or color, without eyes, or ears, or hands, or feet, the everlasting, all pervading, ever present, extremely subtle, unchangeable source of all that is. All the rest, including the great gods whom the ignorant worship and rightly worship as the highest that they know, is delusion. And the real insight, the only abiding salvation, consists in getting to know the impermanence of all else, and the identity of one's own soul

[1] Laws of Manu, XII. 16, 19.

with the Great Soul, in which all else lives, moves, and has its being."[1] The Brahmanic philosophers, like our own Agnostics, claimed to know a good deal about the unknowable.

This philosophic pantheism did not displace the Brahmanism of the Codes; for, whatever might be the speculation which they indulged in, among themselves, the Brahmans held fast in practice to the ancient worship.[2] But the philosophic influence prepared the ground, and sowed the seed from which sprung Buddhism.

Brahmanism, we see, has for its fundamental conceptions, the emanation of the law from Brahma, re-incarnation, as a punishment for ill-doing, return to Brahma, as the reward of virtue; in other words, it rests on an eternal distinction between right and wrong, and a divine sanction for conduct.

§ 3. *Buddhism.*

The difficulty of distinguishing between history and legend in Buddhistic literature makes it almost impossible to reach any positive knowledge concerning the life of the founder of Buddhism. It is a philosophic offshoot from Brahmanism; and the oppressive sway of the priestly caste, as well as the barren formalism to which the Brahmans reduced religion, contributed to its rapid extension in India. Thence it spread to neighboring countries, Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, Tibet, China, and Japan. But its spread took place at the expense of its individuality; for it amalgamated with the religions which prevailed in each of those countries. In India itself, after flourishing for hundreds of years, it was driven out by a revival of Brahmanism which gave rise to modern Hinduism.

The nature of modern Buddhism and its sway over an immense number of the human race from its first exten-

[1] Rhys Davids, op. cit., p. 22.

[2] See Hopkins: Religions of India, Ch. XI.

sion to our own day, has frequently been brought forward as an argument against the universality of religion, or at least the universality of the belief in a Supreme Being.

Now, there are two assumptions in this argument; one is that the original system as expounded by Sakyamuni himself, and followed by his earliest disciples, is the total denial of the existence of a supreme being and of man's immortality. The other is that all the forms of religion, or religious philosophy, which have passed by the name of Buddhism, have held fast to the doctrines of the founder.

Whatever may be the room for dispute about the former assumption, the latter is certainly untenable. The spread of Buddhism has been due to the facility with which, in violation of its fundamental principles, it allied itself to the different forms of religious thought with which it came in contact. "Its teaching," as Monier-Williams says, "has become both negative and positive, gnostic and agnostic. It passes from apparent atheism and materialism to theism, polytheism, and spiritualism. It is under one aspect mere pessimism; under another pure philanthropy, under another monastic communism, under another high morality; under another, simple demonology; under another, a mere farrago of superstitions, including necromancy, witchcraft, idolatry, and fetichism. In some form or another it may be held with almost any religion, and embraces something from almost every creed."[1] Not long since we have been treated to an exposition of, what shall we call it?—Theosophy, under the title of Esoteric Buddhism, which, as Rhys Davids remarks, is neither Esoteric, nor Buddhism. But the inanities of Theosophy, though they have nothing in common with Buddhism, can show just as much claim to the designation as can Chinese Buddhism which embraces beliefs and practices that flatly contradict the essential tenet of Buddha's teaching;[2] or

[1] Buddhism in its Connection, etc., pp. 13–14.

[2] See De Harlez: Les Religions de la Chine, pp. 220 ff.

Tibetan Buddhism, which Rhys Davids acknowledges "has come to be the exact contrary of the earlier Buddhism."[1] Whatever may be the name given to the religion practised in the great temple of Rangoon, with its picture of the wicked in hell, and its perpetual stream of worshippers singing hymns and making offerings for salvation, that religion is not atheism. The beliefs of those who represented Buddhism at the World's Parliament of Religions are not atheistical. Rhys Davids, who contends for the thoroughly atheistic character of Buddha's own doctrine, admits that the creeds as presented by Buddhist believers who represented it at the Congress are separated by an astounding gulf from "the conclusions of scholarship."[2] Even if scholars were agreed—which is far from being the case—that the Buddhism of the Pitakas and other scriptures teaches atheism, the actual belief of the countless millions who have adhered to Buddhism in the countries where it has flourished for hundreds of years, are so many witnesses to the universal tendency of mankind to believe in the existence of a superior being upon whom he depends.

But does the original system itself, as proposed by its founder, contain a denial of God and the immortality of the soul? We are frequently told that not alone is it atheistical, but that the characteristic feature of its atheism is the utter contempt with which it rejects the notion of a deity. In the teachings of Buddha "there is nothing," says Rhys Davids, "about God and the soul, and the nature of them both, and the relation between the two."[3] Flint[4] endeavors to establish a contrary view on the ground that, in the legends of Buddha, the gods of the Hindu Pantheon, with hells and heavens innumerable, abound. The presence of such ideas shows, indeed, that the beliefs of the followers were inconsistent with an atheist-

[1] Buddhism, p. 208. [2] Op. cit., p. 216. [3] Ib., p. 80.
[4] Antitheistic Theories, p. 283.

ical interpretation of the master's doctrine, but it leaves untouched the question of the nature of the doctrine itself. The author whom we have already quoted, one of the most sympathetic among the western exponents of Buddhism, Rhys Davids, holds that the fundamental principles underlying the doctrine of Buddha are:

"The impermanence of every individual; the sorrow inherent in individuality; the non-reality of any abiding principle, of any soul in the Christian sense."[1] "There is no passage of a 'soul,' or of an 'I' in any sense from one life to the other." The only link is the Karma. The theory of the Karma is that "men are merely the present and temporary links in a long chain of cause and effect, a chain in which no link is independent of the rest, can get away from the rest, or can really, as men think they can, start off and continue to be by itself, without the rest. Each link is the result of all that have gone before, and is part and parcel of all that will follow. And just as truly as no man can escape from his present surroundings, so can he really never dissociate himself, though he always take it for granted that he can, either from the past that has produced him, or from the future he is helping to make. There is a real identity between a man in his present life and in the future. But the identity is not a conscious soul which shall fly out away from his body after he is dead. The real identity is that of cause and effect. A man thinks he began to be a few years—twenty, fifty, sixty years ago. There is some truth in that; but in a much larger, deeper, truer sense he has been (in the causes of which he is the result) for countless ages in the past, and those same causes (of which he is the temporary effect) will continue in other like temporary forms in the ages yet to come. In that sense alone, according to Buddhism, each of us has, after death, a continuing life."[2] "The results of his good actions, the fruits of his Karma, as the

[1] Op. cit., p. 135. [2] Ib., p. 128.

Buddhists would call it, will survive when he is dead, and advance the happiness of some other beings who have no conscious identity with himself. But so far as he can reach salvation, he must reach it in this present world, he must enjoy it in this present life."[1] "When the mind has become clear of these delusions (of continued individual existence) a new and brighter world reveals itself to the mind of him who has entered on the path by which he reaches the full heights of the peaceful city of Nirvana in which he who is free from these delusions, lives, moves, and has his being."[2] To reach this consummation, called also the state of Arahatship, one must enter on the Noble Eight-fold Path, and break the Ten Fetters.[3] Arahatship is in itself bliss unspeakable, but it is also an escape from the whirlpool of re-birth, and it is salvation from the latter that is put forth as the goal to be sought. The Wheel of life, or chain of causality, is an attempt, says our author, to explain what happens in every human life.

Arahatship, then, and Nirvana are identical—the life of a man made perfect, who has travelled along the Path, and broken all the Fetters, or, in other words, carried out in its entirety the Buddhist system of self-culture and self-control. Thereby he has extinguished a separation which would lead to another individual birth.

This view which would make Nirvana merely peace in this life, and subsequent annihilation is strongly contested. Not to mention others, Oldenberg, who has brought to bear on the question all the light afforded by the views of Childers, Rhys Davids, Trecknor, and others, shows that this interpretation of Nirvana is not directly contained in Buddha's teaching. As he affirms, from the Buddhist view of transitory being, the consequence that follows dialectically, is that, when a series of conditions has run out into self-extinction, there must remain nothing but a

[1] Op. cit., p. 132. [2] Ibid., p. 132. See Oldenberg; Buddha, p. 243.
[3] Ibid., p. 150.

vacuum.[1] But, he proceeds to show, this logical conclusion was never made the authoritative teaching of Buddhism.[2] Buddha steadily evaded the question of the ultimate goal; he laid down no dogma on the finite or infinite nature of the world. He threw no light upon the question of the saints' condition after death. It may be true that the affirmation of absolute annihilation is the logical conclusion deducible from his premises. But not all founders of religions have followed principles to their logical conclusions; and consistency of thought is almost invariably absent in the mystical Oriental mind.

The "very circumstance that the official dogmatic abstained from answering this question," says Oldenberg, "was sure to lead to greater liberty and variety, in the solution which individual thought worked out, than could be the case with regard to problems for which recognized orthodox solutions had been furnished. Could not that negative answer, which we have come to recognize as the true answer of close dialectic, be met by an affirmative answer also? Might not hearts that quailed before the nothing, that could not relinquish the hope of everlasting weal, gather from Buddha's silence, above all, this one response, that it was not forbidden them to hope?"[3] "Does the Path lead to a new existence? Does it lead into the nothing? The Buddhist creed rests in delicate equipose between the two."[4]

What then is Buddhism as its founder taught it? It is a practical philosophy of life, ignoring all the questions of origin and finality, which are the first concern of every other philosophy. It arose as a reaction from the tyranny and formalism of the Brahmans, and passes over in silence the problems which were of supreme importance in the Brahmanic religion. The first tenet of this religion was that from Brahma originate all things, and eventually

[1] Op. cit., pp. 269 ff.
[2] Ib., p. 276.
[3] Ib., p. 277.
[4] Ib., p. 284.

to Brahma they return. Buddha refused to consider this question at all; holding that the only important interest for man is to learn how to rid himself of the miseries of life by the extinction of all desire. The aim of his entire doctrine is concentrated on making clear the path to be followed in order to reach this goal; hence he does not concern himself with the existence of a deity, or deities. The idea which dominates the system is that of the Karma. To the Karma are ascribed almost all the attributes of the divinity; omnipotent it brings round, with inexorable justice, the punishment of evil, and the reward of virtue. Nothing is outside its sway; and no individual may escape its awards. It is conceived as the Supreme, Eternal Law of Righteousness ruling all things. If to the other attributes that were assigned to it were added that of personality, it would be a monotheistic conception. But the idea is left vague and undefined without the further specification that is needed to make it either pantheistic or monotheistic. The conception does not satisfy the logical demands of reason, nor did it satisfy the followers of Buddha; but it was all that he required as a foundation for his philosophy on the guidance of conduct. This supreme law is the principle which for Buddha transcends the divinities of pantheistic and polytheistic Brahmanism.

The motive power of Buddhism lies in the principle that the individual will reap the reward of his conduct, yet this tenet comes into conflict with the other ascribed to Buddha's teaching, the extinction of personality. Karma inevitably visits evil conduct with punishment; but, if the individual passes into nothingness at death, then the punishment falls not on him, but on another being; and punishment thus conceived is no sufficient deterrent from evil. A motive for entering upon the "Path" is to escape the whirlpool of re-births; these re-births were the re-births of the individual: otherwise, if

the individual perishes completely at death, the sinner who walks not in the "Path," escapes re-birth just as surely as his virtuous brother.

The reconciliation of the two points of doctrine is a constantly recurring difficulty for the followers. But, as Oldenderg says, "In fact Buddhism does not allow itself to be confused by metaphysical questions as to the identity of the subject, in its belief that the reward and punishment of our actions overtakes us. If, in our present state of being, this or that happens to us, it is a result of the fact that we have done this or that in a previous existence: in this simple belief, universally comprehensible, this idea is firmly kept in view, heedless of theoretical difficulties, that he who performs an evil action and he who suffers the punishment thereof, are one and the same person."[1] With so much contradiction, between essential principles prevailing in the system, all attempts to show by close logical reasoning what must have been Buddha's idea of Nirvana, seems to be idle. And the great divergence of views taken by European scholars of the problem precludes any hope that they are likely in the near future to reach a Nirvana of agreement.

We may dismiss the subject with the remark that the metaphysical doctrines ascribed to Buddha could never have been a religion to appeal to men.[2] The human mind cannot long remain in oscillation between metaphysical contradictions. The existence of a Divinity, without which Karma is an incomplete idea, was very soon added. Nirvana, as Buddhism spread, was interpreted to mean a heaven of eternal bliss. Brahma, Indra, and a host of other deities soon reappear. Legendary accounts of Buddha's birth ascribe to himself a divine origin; his apotheosis is not long delayed. Every shade of Oriental polytheism is aggregated to the teachings of

[1] Op. cit., Note, pp. 2582–59.

[2] See Max Müller: Chips, etc., pp. 222, 230.

the master. Buddhism as a historic religion is not the Buddhism of "scholarly conclusions," but the Buddhism of China, Japan, Ceylon, and Tibet.

Whilst, then, no harmony has been reached as to what are the precise doctrines taught by Buddha—if he did teach any precise views on the subject at all—on the nature of Nirvana, the continued existence of the individual, and the identity of the ego deserving, with that of the ego suffering, punishment, two facts are indisputable: first, a persistent endeavor on the part of his followers to satisfy the cravings of reason by practically holding to the identity of personality, connecting evil with its retribution; secondly, as the philosophy developed into a religion, it everywhere embodied in its tenets a belief in future retribution. Its wide extent and long duration is a steady witness to the inherent tendency of human nature to connect the moral law with a sanction outside this earthly existence.

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CHAPTER IV.

ZOROASTRIANISM.

THE religion of the ancient Iranians, which still survives in modern Parseeism, is a form derived from the original Aryan. The Sacred Book in which the teachings of Zoroaster have been preserved, the Avesta, is a remnant of a much more extensive literature which was extant during the Sassanian dynasty in Persia. It comprises four parts: 1. The Yasna and Visparad; liturgical books treating of sacrifices; the former is the most important book of the collection. 2. The Vendidad, or Book of Purifications. 3. The Yashts, or Prayer in Honor of God, and his subordinate deities. 4. The Gahs, or collection of Prayers: these, with some Zend fragments, are sometimes termed the Khord-Avesta, or little Avesta.

The Supreme Deity, Mazda or Ahura Mazda, is The one Supreme God, Lord and Creator of the world and of men.[1] He has made the earth and the heavens, who will one day make the tree of justice flourish, and the kingdom of righteousness.[2]

He is the source and inspiration of all that is good;[3] from him comes the law of virtue. He knows the ways of men, their secret actions, as well as the public, good and bad.[4]

The law is given for the welfare of men, because holiness is the supreme good and happiness.[5]

Throughout the Gathas the highly spiritualized conception of Ahura, as the source and origin of all the good, the source of the moral law, is denoted in almost every page. Assisting him, and dependent upon him, are

[1] Y. 1, 31. [2] Y. 44. [3] Y. 31, 7–11.
[4] Y. 30. [5] Y. 31, 13–16.

numerous good spirits interested in the welfare of man, bringing the souls of the faithful to heaven,[1] and rewarding good actions.[2] The entire spirit of the religion is summed up in the prayer enjoined in the nineteenth chapter of the Vendidad:

"Holiness is the best of all good. Happy, happy the man who is holy with perfect holiness."

"The will of the Lord is the law of holiness: The riches of Vohumand shall be given to him who works in this world for Mazda."[3]

The distinctive characteristic of Zoroastrianism is an all-embracing dualism; for although Ahura Mazda, or Ormazd is the Creator, there is another being outside his sway, Ahriman the evil spirit, whence flows all that is bad; and he, like Ormazd, has associated with him subordinate spirits like himself. Between these two forces there is waged the mighty war of good and evil. In this eternal warfare man cannot be a disinterested spectator; he must take one side or the other. Ahriman and his ministers, the Daevas, endeavor to seduce man to their side; but he can find his salvation in the law of Ormazd, which has been given for his good. To his own free will the choice is left.[4] If he chooses the right path then the good spirits aid him to be holy in thought, in word and deed.[5]

Whoever has chosen the better part in the struggle will receive as his reward, happiness in this world, and supreme bliss from Mazda in the life that endureth forever.[6] The punishment of the wicked will be everlasting, for when they shall, after death, reach the bridge Kinvad, which leads to Paradise, unable to pass over, they shall be condemned to dwell forever in the land of evil spirits.[7] In the nineteenth chapter of the Vendidad Zoroaster asked, "When are the rewards given? Where does the rewarding take place? Whereto do men come to take the reward, that in their

[1] Y. 32, 15. [2] Y. 28, 8. [3] S. B. E., Vol. IV., p. 210.
[4] Y. 30, 2. [5] Y. 30 and 32. [6] Y. 43, 1–3. [7] Y. 46, 11.

life, in the material world, they have won for their souls? Ahura Mazda answered:

"When the man is dead, when his time is over—then the fiend named Vizaresha carries off in bonds the souls of the wicked Daeva worshippers who live in sin—Gladly pass the souls of the righteous to the golden seat of Ahura Mazda, to the golden seat of the Amesha Spentas—the abode of all the holy beings.[1] In the twenty-second Yasht, is a detailed description of the various hells, of evil thought, evil word, and evil action through which the sinner passes till he reaches his final destination in the land of endless darkness;[2] and in a subsequent one we have an allegorical account of the good man's conscience coming to him after death, in the guise of a beautiful maiden to accompany him to the realms of endless light.[3]

An attempt has been made by Mills to read in quite another light the doctrine of reward and punishment as set forth in the Avesta. He is of opinion that hell and heaven are but names for subjective states:—"To say that future rewards and punishments held out in the Gathas were largely if not chiefly spiritual, and in the man himself, would be almost a slur upon the truth. The truth is that the mental heaven and hell with which we are now familiar, as the only future state recognized by intelligent people, and thoughts which, in spite of their familiarity, can never lose their importance, are not only used and expressed in the Gathas, but expressed there, so far as we are aware, for the first time. While mankind was delivered up to the childish terrors of a future, replete with horrors visited upon them from without, the early Iranian sage announced the eternal truth that the rewards of heaven and the punishment of hell can only be from within."[4] This interpretation is at variance with

[1] S. B. E., Vol. IV. 212–214.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XXIII., pp. 318 ff.
[3] Ibid., p. 342 ff.
[4] S. B. E., Vol. XXXI., p. xxi.

the entire tenor of the Zend-Avesta, where perpetually recurring allusions, and formal descriptions, indicate that Zoroaster taught the doctrine of a future life in which good would be rewarded and evil punished, as an objective reality, and not merely a subjective condition of conscience. A text upon which Mills bases his view, in his article *Zoroaster and the Bible*, is translated both by De Harlez and Darmesteter, in a way that precludes the inference which Mills seeks to draw from it.[1] When religions are in question, the temptation of reading into texts or facts, interpretations which fall in with the views of the investigator, seems, for many, almost irresistible.

The conception of sin, as something inherent and essentially evil, is everywhere apparent; and more clearly than any other ethnic religion, the religion of the Avesta indicates, in the moral life, the three elements upon the perception of which a true notion of sin depends; a law of righteousness, in conformity with the will of the Supreme Being, and free will in man, in virtue of which he can obey or disobey that law—obedience leading necessarily to the perfection and happiness of man, while violation of the law inevitably results in failure to reach the supreme good. Virtue, too, is not mere legality, but conformity to the will of Ahura Mazda. Strict justice in all kinds of dealing, fidelity to contracts, chastity, are enforced under heavy penalties.[2] Kindness and charity towards the poor are indispensable virtues. Unlawful lusts are sternly forbidden, and abortion and neglect of children so that they die, are crimes of wilful murder.[3] Women are treated with respect; marriage is clad with an almost sacramental halo. Young married women are reminded that they should be patterns of religious fidelity and virtue; husband and wife are exhorted to be to each other help and support in the

[1] See The Avesta and the Bible: C. F. Aiken, Catholic University Bulletin, July, 1897.

[2] Vend. S. B. E., IV., pp. 33 ff. [3] S. B. E., Vol. IV., pp. 100 ff., 200 ff.

path of virtue, in return for which they may expect happiness for all eternity.[1]

In conclusion it may be confidently said that in the religion of the Avesta, united with the noblest and purest conception of the divinity, and the liveliest belief in the divine origin of the law of right living, with its present and future sanction, we find a code of morality which, though marred by many imperfections, and by the exaggeration of mere legal faults into moral offences, is the nearest approach to the Christian standard to be found among all religions which men have formed for themselves.

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CHAPTER V.

THE RELIGIONS OF CHINA.

THOUGH Chinese literature offers ample documentary testimony concerning the religions which have prevailed among the Chinese from the earliest time of recorded history, the most divergent conclusions have been arrived at by investigators who have examined the religious problem. Whilst some Catholic missionaries, inspired by the traditionalist spirit, so strong at the close of the last century, believed they found in the Sacred Books of China traces of belief in the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation, others have not hesitated to affirm that those books show atheism or materialism to have been the religion of the people who crossed the Hoang-ho about twenty-five centuries before the Christian era. Others, bringing to the examination of the question *a priori* theories as to the origin of all religions, have, like Réville and De Groot, by ignoring all the texts which told against their favorite theories, and by utterly disregarding the historical fact that the Chinese books are not the productions of one homogeneous people, and that the origin of some is separated from that of others by long periods, in some cases extending to two thousand years, have managed to produce a view of Chinese religion corresponding to their theories. Such a mosaic contains about as much truth in it as might be found in a synthesis of elements extracted from the Edda, the Thirty-nine Articles and Poor Richard's Almanac, put together to suit some preconceived opinion that the

religion of the American nation to-day is a mixture of paganism, Christianity and utilitarian philosophy.

If any clear knowledge of Chinese religion is to be reached, four distinct periods of development, as the eminent sinologist, De Harlez, points out, must be distinguished. These periods are:—(1) The earliest ages of the Chinese nation down to the time of the Chow dynasty; (2) The period from the accession of the Chows to the time of Confucius; (3) The Confucian period; and, finally, the modern period. The earliest period showing the original form of religion being the one of most interest for our subject, we shall examine, at first hand, the most ancient records to find out how far they testify to the association of religion and morality in the earliest age of the Chinese nation, before luxury and the pernicious influences of human passion had corrupted it. The oldest books are the Shuh King, the Shih King and the Yi King. The latter work was extant in the time of Confucius, but portions of the others had already perished. He studied those that remained, and, bringing them prominently before the intelligent part of the nation, contributed to their preservation. These books do not profess to contain any revelation, nor to set forth a comprehensive view of a religious system; they are political and historical documents offering us abundant data by which to arrive at, if not a complete knowledge of the entire religious tenets, at least a certainty as to the leading characteristics of the religious and moral life of the people from whom they descend.[1] The first and most important is the Shu-King, a book of historical documents, some of which begin with the reign of Yao, about the twenty-fourth century before our era, others belonging to the seventh. The second, the Shih King, or book of poetry, consists of two parts, the first originating in the time of the Shang dynasty (B. C. 1766–

[1] See Legge: S. B. E., Vol. IV., Preface, p. xiv.

1123); the other belonging to the dynasty of Kau which followed and lasted until B. C. 586. The third great classic is the Yi King, much prized by Confucius and said by some to be the oldest of all the books; but Legge and De Harlez both agree that no portion of it antedates the Kau dynasty.[1] The fourth classic is the Li Ki or Record of Rites, one of a class called the Rituals. It belongs to the period of the Kau dynasty, and does not offer for the character of the early religion testimony as reliable as that of the Shu and the Shih. The books of rituals, says Legge, were gathered up by scholars five or six centuries after the death of Confucius, who may have put into his mouth ideas of their own; so that they cannot be implicitly relied upon as exhibiting the opinions and teachings of the philosopher. The fifth classic, the work of Confucius himself, called The Spring and Autumn, is but little concerned with religious teaching. The system of Lao-tze is found in the Tao-te-King, the work of one of his disciples.

A study of the Shu and the Shih leaves no doubt but that the primitive Chinese worshipped one Supreme Personal God, Shang-ti; they also worshipped inferior spirits whom they believed to be the ministers of Shang-ti; and a cult of ancestors which was subordinate to the worship of the Supreme Being, flourished from the earliest times. The place which it occupies alongside the worship of Shang-ti, in both books, disposes of the contention that it was the basis of religion. The supremacy of Shang-ti as the Sovereign Master who watches over the destiny of men is everywhere manifested. He it was who appointed the martial Thang to regulate the boundaries of the kingdom.[2] He beholds this lower world in majesty, sought for one worthy to rule, and raised up for the state a virtuous

[1] See De Harlez: Les Religions de la Chine, pp. 67 ff.

[2] Shih King Sac. Odes, ode 3, p. 307.

king.[1] In His providence he watches over the ways of men, sending down blessings and chastisements.[2] He is the source of moral law, "the pattern of virtue."[3] He regards not alone the outward action, but even the secret thoughts and the interior dispositions of men,[4] for the inmost chamber is open to the spiritual messengers of God.[5] Reverence and obedience to God are constantly inculcated: "Be reverent,"[6] is the prevailing burden of exhortation and admonition throughout the Shu and the Shih, and the decrees of God's providence are to be received without a murmur.[7] He rewards virtue and punishes vice. The spirit of this recognition of God as the sanction of the moral order is fully expressed in the passage, "When Heaven exerted a great influence preserving and regulating the house of Yin, its sovereigns, on their part, were careful not to lose the (favor of) God, and strove to manifest a good doing corresponding to that of Heaven. But in these times their successor showed himself greatly ignorant of the ways of Heaven—greatly abandoned to dissolute idleness, he gave no thought to the bright principles of Heaven;—on this account God no longer protected him.—Heaven was not with him because he did not make his virtue illustrious,"[8] When the idler will not hearken to God's warnings, but proceeds in his wicked ways, then He sends down on him extreme punishment.[9]

Moral goodness is conceived as something interior to man, not a matter of external formality, and is in itself pleasing to God. "It is virtue that moves heaven, there is no distance which it cannot reach."[10] God was pleased with the intelligent virtue of King Wan, and gave him

[1] Shih King Sac. Odes, ode 7, p. 390. [2] Ib., p. 391. See pp. 184, 185.
[3] Shih, Maj. Odes, Dec. I., ode 8, p. 392.
[4] Maj. Odes, Dec. III., ode 2, p. 415. [5] Ibid.
[6] See pp. 44, 171, 191, 185. [7] Shuh: Pt. V. Book X., pp. 170, 171.
[8] Shu: Pt. V., Bk. XIV., p. 197. [9] Shu: Pt. V., Bk. XIV. See pp. 186–214.
[10] Shu: Pt. II., Bk. II., p. 52.

victory in return. He taught him that no utilitarian standard is the rule of morals: "God said to King Wan, Be not like those who reject this and cling to that; be not like those who are ruled by their desires;" and squaring his conduct to this intrinsic standard of goodness, "he ascended grandly before the others to the height of virtue."[1] And the reward of virtue is happiness and tranquillity here below[2] and happiness with Shang-ti hereafter.

This constant recognition that virtue of itself is pleasing to God and vice hateful, that punishment is incurred for evil and reward for good, implies a profound conviction of man's responsibility. The same truth is expressed in the frequent appeals for mercy, prayer for pardon, the penitent sentiments of the heart urged in a plea for mercy and the remission of punishment.[3] Expiatory sacrifices to God were so prominent a feature in religion that the Li Ki frequently commemorates them as the distinctive feature of worship. In that book "The Ancient Kings sacrificed to Shang-ti" is an expression of frequent recurrence.

Shang-ti of early Chinese religion, if we can accept the testimony of the Shu and the Shih, is a thoroughly monotheistic conception, embracing the elements of Personality, Over-ruling Providence, Source and Sanction of the moral order. All the divine perfections as they are familiar to Christian theology are not found in it; but as far as it goes it is a true conception, imperfect indeed, because it springs from very imperfect knowledge. An attack was made on Legge for using the term God as an analogue for Shang-ti; but he amply vindicates his choice, and maintains that no other translation would convey justly the conception expressed by the Chinese name.[4]

[1] Shih: Maj. Odes, Dec. I., ode 7, p. 391.
[2] Shih: Maj. Odes, Dec. III., 10, 11.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Introduction, p. xxiii ff. Vol. III., S. B. E.

Defenders of systems which hold that monotheism is necessarily a late phase of religious development, have endeavored to get rid of Shang-ti, who proves a rock upon which their theories split. Alongside of the personal god, we frequently find another being mentioned, apparently on a footing of equality with Shang-ti, Tien or Heaven. Hence, the argument proceeds, Shang-ti is but an animistic conception of the spirit of the heavens. In an exhaustive examination of the various texts in which these terms are found, De Harlez refutes this argument. Sometimes the word Tien is used as synonymous with Shang-ti, by a figure of speech such as is common in European languages. We say, for example, "Thank Heaven," "Would to Heaven," "Heaven forbid,"—but this metaphorical use is perceived from the context, in which personality is usually implied. Only when it is used literally does it mean the material heaven.[1]

Another attempt to dispose of the monotheism of the early Chinese is made on the ground that the worship of Shang-ti was confined to the rulers, and was not the religion of the people. But this opinion finds its refutation in many texts of the Sacred Books, as, for example, where it is stated that "the poor people, carrying their children and leading their wives, made their moan to heaven against the tyranny of their rulers;"[2] and elsewhere we read that Heaven compassionates the people and what they desire Heaven will be found to give effect to.[3]

The belief in immortality is sufficiently attested by the worship of ancestors; besides, the continued existence after death is expressly affirmed. The good King Wan, after descending and ascending, in other words, after his body had gone to the tomb and his soul had gone to heaven, now sits at the right hand of God. "King Wan is on high; Oh, bright is he in heaven.—King Wan as-

[1] See De Harlez, op. cit., pp. 35, 45.

[2] Shu, Pt. V., Bk. XII., p. 184. [3] Shu, Pt. V., Bk. I., pp. 126, 127.

cends and descends, on the left and the right of God." [1] Of this text Legge says, "Language could not more expressly intimate the existence of a supreme, personal God, and the continued existence of the human spirit." [2] Whilst the belief in the future reward of virtue is abundantly evident, we find no corresponding affirmation of punishment in store for bad conduct; and this omission can scarcely be accounted for as accidental. The explanation for this anomaly which is offered by De Harlez is that filial piety being then as now the basis of Chinese society there was a general repugnance to bring into prominence the possibility that parents, whilst the object of religious veneration, might be actually suffering the punishment of divine justice in the other life.

With this elevated and comparatively pure religion, there goes in the Kings a moral code of a high order. It embraced piety toward God, to be expressed in worship, reverence, obedience and a virtuous life. The chief elements of virtuous conduct are submission to authority as constituted by God; care of parents, goodwill towards all, kindness, veracity, temperance, modesty of demeanor, shunning all pride and haughtiness, a scrupulous watch over private actions and even secret thoughts. Family ties are recognized as sacred because coming from God. Polygamy was practised as among all ancient oriental peoples; but women were held in honor, enjoying influence even in state affairs. When a consciousness of sin weighed upon him, the guilty one betook himself to prayer; penance and a change of heart were expressed as a plea for forgiveness and the remission of punishment. While prosperity and peace were looked upon as temporal blessings to be obtained by God's favor, the happiness of the other life was held to be the supreme reward of virtue. Thus among this ancient people a consistent monotheism

[1] Shih: Major Odes, Dec. I., ode 1.
[2] Ibid., p. 378, note.

with a pure worship, devoid of any immoral elements, either in belief or rite, went hand in hand with, and offered a solid basis for, an advanced, enlightened morality.

In the subsequent period of Chinese history a profound change gradually asserted itself. The Chows, a people differing in blood, manners, and religion, imposed their authority on the worshippers of Shang-ti. Under the new influence the personality of Shang-ti gradually fades from the religious consciousness. In the Chow Li we find quite another religion. Heaven and earth become the chief objects of worship. Sacrifices are offered to the sun and moon. Spirits of the mountain and woods, and mythical personages are introduced.[1] The God who sees the hearts of men has disappeared; the beneficent intervention of supernatural power is no longer secured by a virtuous life, but by the magic arts of the sorcerer; shamanistic practices prevail. Subsequently to the fall of the Chows, the Tsin, a people akin to the ancient race, gained supremacy, and religion was purified of a great deal of these corruptions. Meanwhile Confucius and Lao-tze had arisen.

Confucianism, which Legge calls the religion of China *par excellence*, dates from the sixth century before Christ.[2] When the country was a prey to misfortunes traceable chiefly to the vices and tyranny of the later Chows, Confucius appeared. His religious views differed in no way from those of his contemporaries; for, as he frequently asserted, he was but a transmitter whose sole aim was the restoration of ancient manners and ideas. He worshipped Shang-ti, believed in spirits, and in the efficacy of prayer. Man he held to be naturally good, but corrupted by passions. The true means of overcoming these vicious tendencies he taught to be a constant contemplation of virtuous models and the study of ancestral wisdom. His ideal was the man in whom virtue

[1] De Harlez, pp. 93 ff. [2] Ibid., pp. 160 ff.

became incarnate, so that he was incapable of doing wrong. In striving to imitate this model, man is to practise wisdom, justice, uprightness, sincerity, veracity, fidelity, duty towards the state, respect for the aged and the observance of claims arising from family ties. He sets on a level with these virtues the rules and regulations of conduct traced by kings and sages of former times. These rules as interpreted by Confucius extend to the most trivial details of conduct; and a violation of any one of them was a violation of the law of heaven. Indeed, in the application of his system, these minutiæ gradually overshadowed the important elements of the moral life. In his moral teachings Shang-ti is ignored; as to a future life he expressed no opinion, for he professed to speak of nothing concerning which he had no positive knowledge.[1] The moral law has no longer any divine basis; and its object is merely to secure temporal comfort and prosperity.[2] The effect of his teaching, when it became popularized, was to weaken and entirely banish the idea of a personal God, in favor of an impersonal, undetermined entity, Tien or Heaven, half material, half spiritual. Whilst insisting on the worship of ancestors, he never appealed to immortality as a motive to influence conduct. His teaching effected the extinction of all belief in the divine sanction for conduct; gave a preponderance to the exterior conformity with rule over interior virtue.[3] Morality being regulated inexorably by a conformity to ancient custom could not advance to any higher level, so that, De Harlez remarks, while the doctrines of Confucius, maintained for Chinese civilization a certain elevation, it prevented it from reaching the high level of which it was susceptible. Thus, in the doctrines of Confucius, we find the main cause of the stagnant condition of Chinese thought, as it has been

[1] Legge: S. B. E., III., Pref., p. xiv.
[2] De Harlez, p. 107.
[3] Ibid., p. 169.

described by some one: "Everything there is exactly measured, calculated, weighed by the laws of human nature; its one great idol is good sense. But as soon as these marvels have aroused the admiration of the West comes the discovery that this wonderful people neither breathes, nor moves, nor lives, and that all this wisdom has only ended in creating a sublime automaton. Why? Because man is there deprived of an ideal superior to himself. In Chinese society man having for his final end but man, finds his goal in his starting-point; he cannot escape being stifled within the narrow limits of humanity. In this dwarf society everything is deprived of its crown; morality wants heroism; royalty, its royal muse; verse, poetry; philosophy, metaphysics; life, immortality; because God above all is wanting." [1]

About the time of Confucius there appeared another illustrious man who endeavored to correct the evils of his time and raise the standard of morality by a system of philosophy: for though the religion of Taoism claims him for its founder, Lao-tze never himself assumed the rôle of a religious teacher. In the Tao-te-King, a work of one of his disciples, we find what may be looked upon as the teaching of "the old philosopher." His speculations were in strong contrast with the teachings and methods of Confucius; for while the latter confined himself to utilitarian teachings and cared not to look beyond the horizon of earthly life, Lao-tze boldly launched out beyond the bounds of sense and time to discover the secret reason that lies at the bottom of all existence, and from this principle to solve the question of human destiny. According to his view all things originate from Tao. Tao, which has been translated The Way, is the absolute, eternal, unchangeable being, spiritual in its nature. All things arise from it, though substantially distinct; heaven and earth come from it, but they are

[1] See W. S. Lilly: Ancient Religious and Modern Thought, p. 110.

eternal; all other things return to the original principle. In the conception of Tao, personality is not marked distinctly, but there is frequently a strong suggestion of it.[1] Man, endowed with free will, is essentially good; but the desire of sensible things gave rise to passions and vices. The end of conduct is, by the imitation of Tao, and by bringing one's life into harmony with intelligence, to re-establish one's self in calm and repose. This return to Tao is the sanction of morality; but as to the way this return takes place we are left in the dark.

There is no systematic moral code; but the practice of humility, simplicity, benevolence, and the kindred virtues are prescribed. Ambition is to be avoided; well-doing toward all, and even the forgiveness of injuries are inculcated.[2] But the subtleties of this metaphysical doctrine, without any tangible religious basis, proved too impalpable for the Chinese people. The Confucian teachings, on the contrary, directing themselves to the practical side of life took a deep hold on them and shaped Chinese thought and civilization. The doctrines of Lao-tze, however, were taken up by many disciples, and, after gradually undergoing at their hands profound alterations, which left but little of the original principles remaining, they became associated with shamanism, alchemy, practices of occult sciences, and belief in spirits. Lao-tze himself became identified with Tao and received divine honors. Various other incarnations were invented, and a hierarchy was established. When Buddhism was introduced in its corrupted, polytheistic form, the Taoists, in order to compete with this popular rival, borrowed many of the beliefs which it had developed. Gods and goddesses, inferior spirits, deified mortals, incarnations of Tao, were introduced. Any attempt to indicate the exact nature of Taoism, as it exists at present in China,

[1] Annales du Musée Guimet, Vol. XX., p. 11.
[2] Ibid., p. 12.

would require a historical exposition of its fluctuations during twenty centuries. The followers of Taoism may be divided into two classes,—the hierarchy, and the people who follow their practices. The former profess a morality abounding in high maxims of conduct, but their practice is at variance with their profession. The sanction of morality consists in the abridgment of life and the ills of earthly existence, and this other principle, "He who wishes to become an immortal of Heaven must perform thirteen hundred good actions; three hundred suffice for an immortal of the earth."[1]

Buddhism is widely professed by the Chinese. It has been examined among the religions of India. Here it is sufficient to remark that as it appears in China, with its pantheon of gods and goddesses to whom prayers and sacrifices are offered, its innumerable hells and heavens, it is in direct contradiction with the fundamental principle of the philosophical system of the founder of Buddhism. It is in turn, says De Harlez, feared, respected, and despised by the people, and the conduct of its doctors is not of such a kind as to win the respect of the learned or the ignorant. In modern China, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism flourish together. The bulk of the people do not seem to have any definite religion, now addressing themselves to a Buddhist priest, or praying to a Buddhist god for a favor; at another time to a Taoist, and impartially despising both when not in need of them. The popular religion of the Middle Kingdom is a compound of all the beliefs that exist or ever have existed in the country, mingled with countless superstitions, so that the aggregation defies all analysis.

As we examine the relations recognized by the Chinese mind between religion and morality, we find that they have been intimately associated. In the earliest stage of Chinese history, as we know it from the Shu King and

[1] De Harlez, pp. 94 ff.

the Shih King, there is a high conception of the divinity, as the Sovereign Lord and Ruler of men, from whom proceeds the moral law and its sanction. Along with this belief in a personal god and depending upon it, is an elevated code of conduct, extending not alone to outward conduct but to the hearts of men. As this belief in God gradually became blurred, there was a corresponding change in the attitude of the mind towards the moral world. Interior dispositions, the essential element of all true morality, were lost sight of; not virtue but superstitious practices became the means to win the favor of supernatural powers. Confucius aimed at restoring ancestral virtue; but his philosophy, ignoring God as the basis of moral law, was without an adequate ideal to appeal to the nobler impulses of man; morality degenerated into a utilitarian view in which prudence is the only virtue, and well-being the end of life. The moral sense lost its perspective, so that the petty and insignificant rose to primary importance, and virtue became in a large measure a matter of ceremony and formality.

The nobler philosophical system of Lao-tze did not meet the wants of human nature, the emotional side of which demands for the objects of its aspirations something more than a vague, shadowy, impersonal, unresponsive, blind principle. Soon the deep ontological speculations are lost sight of, or travestied out of recognition in the aggregation of heterogeneous elements which gathered around the Taoist philosophy and turned it into a religion. But whatever have been the phases of religious belief as it has developed in the Chinese mind, one encounters a tendency to look outside this life for the sanction of conduct.

The will of Shang-ti, at whose right hand sits the virtuous Wan, the return of the just to union with Tao, the absorption into Nirvana of the man who has extinguished in himself the principle of evil, the various conceptions

of heaven and hell, in the corrupted forms of Buddhism and Taoism, are all expressions of one underlying belief, that on the character of conduct here depends the condition of man's hereafter.

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CHAPTER VI.

PAGANISM OF GREECE AND ROME.

§ 1. *Greece.*

THE ancestors of the Greeks and the Romans, on leaving Asia, long before the dawn of history, brought with them, along with their Aryan speech, a form of that Aryan nature worship from which sprang the gods of the Zend Avesta and the Rig Veda. The philological argument for the original identity of Varuna, Uranus and Zeus, Jovis Pater, Diespita, Djauspita, which is to be placed to the credit of Max Müller,[1] assures us, beyond a doubt, that the supreme divinity of Greece and Rome had the same origin as the Vedic gods. The earliest religion, therefore, of the Pelasgian and Latin Races included the worship of an overruling, personal divinity. Another important element in the religious life of these peoples was the worship of domestic divinities, of Hestia, the goddess of the hearth and the sacred fire, of the Roman Lares and Penates. This domestic religion played an important part in establishing the family and the subsequent social organization. It was, according to Fustel de Coulanges,[2] the principle which sanctified family ties, conferred parental authority, gave stability and inviolability to marriage, and created the rights of property and the civil code. According to the theory of this author the domestic religion must have been the earliest form; but like every other theory ascribing a uniform origin to all religions, it runs against facts which refuse to be

[1] Max Müller: Chips, etc., Vol. II., Ch. XVI., XVII.

[2] La Cité Antique.

squared to it. After developing his view smoothly in the course of a hundred and more pages, Fustel de Coulanges is obliged to recognize the existence of another form of worship addressed to the gods of Olympus and the Capitol; and with charming inconsistency he disposes of the difficulty with this remark: "Which of these two religions was the first, no one can tell."[1] Whatever may have been the preponderance of either element in primitive ages, we find that in the earliest pictures of Greek life, the Homeric poems, the worship of the Olympian divinities was thoroughly established. Anthropomorphism had assigned to the original nature gods a local habitation and a human personality. They lead, on the summit of Mount Olympus a life after the fashion of men; they are endowed with human passions and wants, with lust, with jealousy and with hate. They mingle in the affairs of men, taking sides in earthly wars, cherishing animosities against individuals and communities, or extending to these a friendly protection in return for invocation and worship. They are honored by prayer and sacrifice; but the splendor of the offering rather than the interior disposition of the supplicant is the object of their appreciation. There is no conception of a love for men, as a divine attribute. The gods, on the contrary, are often inspired with a vengeful hate towards mortals, which springs not from any repugnance in the divine nature to evil, or corresponding affinity with good, but from such feelings of passion or interest as are the mainsprings of human action.[2]

As a natural consequence of this conception of the divinity's attitude towards man, his sentiments towards the gods are those of fear, rather than love. He felt himself a weak mortal at the mercy of the powerful and capricious beings, who exercised their power for his injury, and he

[1] La Cité Antique, p. 137.

[2] See Maury: Religions de la Grèce, I., p. 343.

hated them in return. Hesiod, as well as Homer, attributes the misfortunes of men, not to any discriminating exercise of divine authority applied to the punishment of evil, but to the ill-will of the gods. "Nowhere indeed do we find," says Maury, "any expression which indicates in primitive Greece, the idea of the love of the creature for its Creator, of man for God."[1] The anthropomorphic tendency aggravated by the influences of poetry, which freely introduced mythological histories of the gods, and frequently confused them with traditional heroes, soon extinguished all the original traits of nature worship. The symbolism which lay beneath the conception of the nature gods was replaced by histories, often highly immoral, of the personal divinities in their relations with one another and with human beings. The fructification of the earth by rain, for example, gave rise to the story of Zeus and Danaë. The worship of gods and goddesses, who were conceived as beings subject to the passions, could not avoid developing immoral characteristics, in which the supposed proclivities of divine beings were honored. Material representations of their amours and symbolic emblems of the original myths were a prominent feature of Greek religion. Embracing in it such powerful elements of disintegration, Greek religion steadily tended to, and at an early period reached, a condition in which both its creed and its rites were in conflict with the elementary principles of morality.

Though conceived as beings who violated all the decencies of life, the gods were, in the popular thought, which is never much troubled by finding itself involved in a logical inconsistency, regarded as the guardians of the moral order. The eye of Zeus sees everywhere; the other divinities assist in the punishment of guilt; the just man will receive the reward of his virtue, while the wicked will be punished not alone here but hereafter. Beyond

[1] Op. cit., I., p. 341.

this life Tartarus awaits him, when punishment will be everlasting. The Elysian fields of Homer, the myths concerning Rhadamanthus and Minos testify to an early belief in a future retribution. This idea of moral retribution is personified in the Erinyes or Furies, who, as ministers of the divine vengeance, followed the wicked beyond the confines of earthly life. The fear of the gods in the earlier period prevailed to lend its sanction to morality. But as on the one side the disintegrating influence of anthropomorphism asserted itself, and on the other, enlightenment and civilization progressed, the absurdity of looking to the gods of Olympus as the guardians of all morality became more and more obvious to the Greek mind. Zeus and his fellow-divinities were soon judged unworthy censors of all concerning the relation between the sexes; yet, he was still retained as the guardian of justice. "While still repeating all the scandalous stories current concerning Olympian morals, as if to justify his own like frailties, the Greek feared the gods, avengers of justice; and if he violated an oath taken with solemn imprecations, dreaded the Erinyes, guardians of the moral law who pursued the perjurer with unremitting vengeance."[1] Religion never had on the Greek mind any such deep influence as we have seen it exercise over the Egyptians. The Greek was devoid of any real sense of sin. When he prayed and offered sacrifice, it was not to express any profound feeling of the need of expiation, but rather to enlist the good-will of the beings from whom he had received some favor and expected more.[2] There was no expression in the language to denote moral evil; it was a kind of blemish on the symmetry of character and nothing more.[3] For most of the crimes against morality he could find a precedent in the history of the

[1] Duruy: History, I., p. 431. (Ed. Boston, 1894.)
[2] Rawlinson: Ancient Religions, p. 207.
[3] Döllinger: Gentile and Jew, Bk. VI., Chap. I.

gods themselves, and, in consequence, he looked upon such breaches of the moral order, as coming from an impulse irresistible in his nature, and as faults which the divinity must judge with a lenient eye. Polytheism, Maury, following Victor Cousin, remarks, must by its very nature injure morality; for where many gods are acknowledged to whom different characters and conflicting interests are ascribed, the conduct which may be pleasing to one may be regarded as hateful to another; thus the moral standard becoming doubtful, no essential difference between good and evil will be recognized. Yet we have seen that in Egypt, a very profound sense of this essential difference went hand in hand with polytheism. It was less the conflict of interests of characters ascribed to the Greek gods, than the immoral conduct with which they were credited, which ruined the standard of morality. The fatal defect of Greek polytheism, resulting in the destruction of any sense of a natural antagonism between moral good and evil, not only rendered Greek religion incapable of affording any general support to morality, but turned it into an element of corruption. Immoral stories related by the poets of the gods were reproduced by painters and sculptors, in the decoration of the temples; theatrical representations of myths and mythical episodes of revoltingly immoral character were enacted. Sometimes religious rites degenerated into scenes of profligacy and debauchery. This influence of religion, corrupting public morals and in turn aggravated by the evil condition which it helped to produce, together with the political factors of Greek life, the contempt for labor, the existence of slavery, and a national character strongly disposed to sensual enjoyments and the love of physical beauty, brought practical morality to a low ebb. Antique morality, having the family for its basis, treated as crimes chiefly those acts directly injurious to family or social life, such as adultery, incest, in-

gratitude to parents, murder, perjury, gross injustice. But sexual irregularities of other kinds are blamed only for their physical or material consequences. In early times the Greeks respected the sanctity of marriage; and in the later corruption of morals this respect abided in theory. But while marriage was held in honor as ensuring the continuity of the family, the wife herself was degraded, and the respect lawfully hers was transferred to the courtesan.[1] This latter class was treated with leniency, often with distinction, and sometimes selected to discharge in a body the rites of religion. The moral degradation which prevailed may be judged from the fact that the vice which found its precedent in the story of Jupiter and Ganymede became a universal plague infecting some of the most gifted of the Greeks, and enlisted in its cause all the graces of poetry and art.

But enlightened human reason could not acquiesce in permanently accepting a condition in which the religious and the moral ideal were at variance. Men given up to a national vice, which was countenanced and palliated by prevailing religious ideas, could not stifle the protestations of their moral nature, which rebelled against a relationship between religion and morality injurious to both. We can trace the constant tendency, even in this degenerate state, to assert a more rational view, and look for a remedy to the evil in an adjustment of religious belief to the demands of the moral sense. When reason asserted itself over passion, it still maintained the moral sanction in the religious ideal. While the degradation of morals was complete in all that regarded the relations of the sexes, no such perversity prevailed in the department of justice; and in what concerned justice the moral sanction continued to be derived from religion. The same Zeus who is the profligate lover of Leda, Ganymede, and Alcmene is still looked upon as the guardian of contracts, the re-

[1] Maury, op. cit., III., p. 32.

corder of oaths, the vigilant vindicator of justice. Under the influence of advancing culture, anthropomorphism which had done so much to injure the religious ideal was made to lend its influence towards its restoration. As in the earliest stages of nature worship, man deified physical forces, so in the development of culture he deified the moral qualities of his own nature. Through the means of art and poetry, religion was brought home as a moral influence to man. Zeus, Hera, Athene, Apollo, Artemis, Poseidon, Aphrodite, Demeter and Proserpine, Dionysius and Hercules became, says Maury, "so many types in which the artists united what we call the ideal of man and woman, at different ages, in different conditions of life, the different manifestations of virtue which they derive from God." [1] The popularity of the mysteries increased as the faith in polytheism was killed by the results of anthropomorphism. The mysteries were the expression of some consciousness of sin and of the belief that pardon was necessary to obtain happiness after death and might be obtained in this life.[2] The mysteries of Eleusis, which were the most popular, contained in their rites purifications supposed to cleanse the soul from sin. The chief object of the Orphic rites was to obtain pardon for sin, by the accomplishment of various lustrations and other ceremonies. The belief in the efficacy of these mysteries and their frequentation argues the existence of a sense of responsibility towards a divine authority which even the disastrous influence of the most immoral polytheism could not stifle. The protest of reason against the conflict of the two fundamental facts of the rational mind issued in two opposite intellectual movements, one towards the moralization of religion, the other towards scepticism. The sceptical tendency is manifested in the comic poets, who turned the gods into ridicule, and in the philosophers who challenged their existence. Aristo-

[1] Op. cit., III., p. 478. [2] Ib., II., pp. 341–351.

phanes in the *Birds* and the *Clouds* attacked the sacrifices; and laughed to scorn divinities guilty of immorality and injustice. Euhemerus, in a theory which is considered the prototype of Spencer's Ghost theory, explained away the gods; and, if antiquity is to be believed, Diagoras was the first to say in his heart, "There is no god."[1] The conclusion of Protagoras, "I am not in a position to say whether the gods exist or not. The way to this knowledge is blocked by the shortness of human life, and the darkness which overspreads it" must have expressed the attitude of many minds towards this question. Maury, however, does not hesitate to declare that "the multitude continued to believe in the gods. Neither the reasoning of philosophy nor the witticisms of the comic poets could destroy the religious sentiment in the immense majority of the Hellenic people.[2] Even in Athens, where toleration was widest, public opinion condemned the incredulity of Protagoras and Diagoras, which was ascribed not to rational conviction but to the pernicious influence of the passions.[3]

The other movement towards a moralization of religious ideas was much more extensive and more fruitful in results. A purer conception of the Deity, accompanied by a higher morality, gradually asserted itself in poetry and philosophy. The Zeus of the tragic poets is no longer the Zeus of the Homeric times. These writers, who refuse to acknowledge as gods beings stained with shameful debauchery, reach the belief that the divinity is the Source of all good. The divine nature penetrates the universe, seeing all things and seen of none. From the divinity is derived the ancient law which antedates time itself. The sense of right and wrong in the human mind is a reflection of the divinity. "O foolish pride," says the choir in the Bacchantes, "which pretends to be wiser

[1] See, however, note by Maury, III., p. 470.
[2] Ib., III., p. 473.
[3] Ib., p. 472.

than the wise and ancient laws. Why should it be painful to our weakness to acknowledge the power of a supreme being, whatever else may be its attributes, and to recognize a law older than time."[1] Sometimes the profound conviction of the existence of the moral law as something not of earthly origin, almost reaches the Christian conception that it expresses a necessity which admits of no modification even by an arbitrary enactment of the divine will. Zeus himself must bow to the ancient law. The idea that divine vengeance follows violations of the moral law, that the Erinyes are the inexorable ministers of justice, rings like a dominant note throughout the tragic poets. From the unjust laws of Kings, "which went not forth from Zeus," Antigone appeals to "Heaven's law, unwritten and unchangeable. That law was not the child of yesterday, nor knoweth man the source from whence it came."[2]

A clearer though still obscure notion of the future state and of the moral sanction is reached by Epicharmus, Pindar, Æschylus, who represent the just dwelling as in heaven and praising the Divinity with hymns. "The recompenses which religion promised to virtue were of a character to promote the desire of immortality, as of a better life awaiting us beyond the tomb. This thought was strengthened by the teachings of the mysteries, whilst the faith in the future chastisement derived new force from the reports of the initiated (puisaient un nouvelle force dans les récits que passaient les initiés)."[3] The philosophical movement towards the moralization of religious ideas found its highest expression in Plato and Aristotle. The former, giving a scientific form to the doctrine already suggested by Socrates, rises from the existence of the good, the just and the true, to the recog-

[1] Eurip.: Bacchantes, V. 882 ff. Maury, III., p. 5.
[2] See Döllinger, op. cit., Bk. VI., Chap. V., Nos. 67, 68.
[3] Antigone, 446 ff. [4] Maury, op. cit., III, p. 52.

nition of a Being supremely good, just and true—God Himself, who is the adequate object of human love.[1] Everywhere, in the Gorgias, the Timæus, the Phædro, Plato reiterates the belief in the immortality of the soul, combined with the doctrine of retribution in the future life. The various fables which he employs in the illustration of his views almost invariably relate that after death the soul must pass the ordeal of judgment. The just will be admitted to participation in the immortal life of God, while the wicked will be condemned to the torments which he describes in the tenth chapter of the *Republic*. Of Aristotle's views it is sufficient to remark that his proofs of the existence of God, the relation of the spiritual and material elements in man, the nature of right and wrong, have, after undergoing but slight modification, been incorporated in Christian philosophy.

We may sum up the facts concerning the relations of religion and morality as they become apparent in this rapid survey of Greek belief. There was at all times a recognition of a divine sanction of the moral law; and the idea of that sanction becomes more moral as the conception of the divinity approaches to monotheism. A steady action and reaction prevails: the degradation of religion by anthropomorphism injuriously affects the moral life, and in return, the corruption of morals is reflected in religious belief and worship. In that branch of morals where corruption is greatest, the relations of the sexes, the perversity corresponds with the outrageous notion entertained of the divine beings; at the same time in the field of justice a truer standard prevails, which likewise finds its correspondent in a more moral conception of the Deity. Reason does not acquiesce in a conflict between the two great elements in the rational life; but, taking its stand upon the moral truth, which from its own nature it more readily grasps, condemning as false the

[1] See the Banquet, passim.

obnoxious elements which produce the clash, endeavors by their elimination, to make religion moral, and morality religious. The absence of any truly reverential character in the polytheistic religion, and the failure to teach any adequate or precise notion of the nature of moral evil, such as existed among the Egyptians, together with the natural outcome of mythological polytheism, left religion unable to afford practical aid to morality. But the religious sentiment within the heart of man continually protested that if the scheme of life were as it should be, the moral and the religious sentiments would harmonize and sustain each other.

§ 2. *Rome.*

The character of the ancient Roman religion, together with the influence which it exercised on social and political life, justifies the boast of Cicero: "If we compare the Roman people with other nations, we find these surpass it in other things, but it rises superior to them in its worship which it pays the gods." [1] The old Aryan tradition survived in the worship of Jupiter, who, though associated with subordinate divinities, was the supreme ruler of the universe. The worship of the Lares and Penates existing from the earliest times, though overshadowed by the worship of the state gods of the capitol, still continued to occupy a great part of the Roman religion. Even when adverse influences had well-nigh destroyed religious faith, the people clung fast to their domestic gods, the patrons of the family and the guardians of the hearth. Instead of worshipping a host of gods and goddesses springing from mythology and tradition, as manipulated by poetry, the religious Roman paid his homage to a large number of deities presiding over almost all the actions of daily life, and taking charge of man, from the time he ut-

[1] De Natura Deorum, II. 2.

tered his first cry till his body was consigned to the tomb and his immortal part recommended to the Manes.[1] Every manifestation of the divinity which the Roman mind recognized became for it, by a process of abstraction, a special divinity. The unimaginative character of the Roman devoid of the poetic enthusiasm of the Greek, by causing him to conceive his gods rather as abstract personifications of various divine attributes and qualities, preserved the early religion from experiencing those baleful influences of anthropomorphism which rapidly demoralized Greece. This want of enthusiasm and a certain hardness of character, while it saved the religion from the vagaries of anthropomorphism, imprinted upon it a coldness and formalism in which no sentiments of piety could flourish. The Roman looked upon his deities as powerful beings to whom he was obliged to defer, and whom he should propitiate with offerings and sacrifice. Fear, without love, was the motive of his worship. If he failed in his offices to them, or behaved in a manner of which they disapproved, he expected to incur their wrath. But, if he discharged his obligations, he considered himself as entirely independent of them. No generous devotion or admiration, so prominent in the Oriental religions, had any place in the religious sentiment. A spirit of bargaining took the place of piety.[2]

A strong sense of justice was the most prominent trait of the national character; and the Roman assumed that justice as between man and man should prevail between man and the Divinity. "The upright man," says Mommsen, "fulfilled the requirements of the sacred ritual with the same mercantile punctuality with which he met his earthly obligations, and, at times, did more than his due if the god had done so on his part."[3] There was no

[1] Fustel de Coulanges, op. cit., p. 165.
[2] Boissier: La Religion Romaine, I. 8.
[3] History of Rome, I., p. 234. (Ed. New York, 1891.)

perception of an Almighty Creator, watching with providential care over mankind. Jupiter was the powerful patron of Rome, who in return for his special worship was under contract to afford special protection, and, as long as Rome honored him, the Roman expected victory.

With the relations between man and God conceived in such a fashion, with the absence of any enthusiasm of character, and the methodical and practical cast of mind dominant, the religion of Rome was reduced to a formalism which effectually hindered the growth of any spiritual piety. The state took possession of religion. Everything was regulated by the state. The number of priests in the various colleges, the time of taking the auspices, the nature of the sacrifices, the very words, attitudes and gestures, were all determined. No impulses of personal devotion were tolerated. Private sentiment in worship was as much out of place and might prove equally as disastrous to him who exhibited it, as poetry in a legal conveyance. "The Roman fear of the gods," says Mommsen, "exercised a powerful influence on the mind of the multitude, but it was by no means the sense of awe in the presence of an all-controlling nature of an Almighty God; it was of a very earthly character, and scarcely differed in any material respect from the trembling with which the Roman debtor approached his just but very strict and very powerful creditor." [1] Such was the spirit of early religion in Rome, and, coming as it did from the character of the people, it changed but slowly, and died hard only in the ultimate disintegration of the national religion.

The belief in immortality prevailed from the earliest times. One of the chief parts of worship was that paid to the Manes. The spirit of the ancestor, invisible but ever present, was believed to hover round the family that had inherited his blood. Cicero tells us that the belief

[1] History of Rome, I., p. 235. See Boissier, op. cit., I., pp. 20 ff.

in another life antedated the earliest attempt at forming a civil or religious code, and that without it the funeral rites and the pontifical regulation of the cemeteries would be unintelligible.[1] He dwells upon the fulfilling of these rites as a part of a citizen's duty. "Give to the Manes what belongs to them; for our ancestors would that those who had quitted this life should be of the number of the gods."[2] It was a prevalent belief, which survived the age of scepticism, that if a man were deprived of sepulture, or buried without the appropriate rites, there could be no rest for his soul in the other world.[3] This belief in immortality did not embrace any clearly-defined notion of a separate existence for the soul. The earliest view seems to have been that the tomb was the dwelling of both the body and the vital principle. Later on the impression was that there was a kingdom of the dead within the earth, where all the departed shades lived a life somewhat after the fashion of that of earth.[4] With the introduction of Greek ideas came the legends concerning Tartarus and the Elysian Fields.

Though the conception of the gods was crude and the religion cold and perfunctory, the moral sanction derived from the divinity proved an efficacious safeguard of morality. Jupiter, from the earliest times, was the representative of justice. Oaths, contracts, parental and marital rights found in him a vigilant guardian. When the Roman state believed itself to have just reason for war, Jupiter, the god of justice, was invoked to vindicate its claims.[5] The various departments of human conduct were under the protection of some particular divinity, who watched over the observance of the moral law in this domain. Violations of duty were injuries done to

[1] Tusculan, I. 12.
[2] De Legibus, II. 9, 22. Duruy: History of Rome, Vol. I., pp. 219 ff.
[3] Boissier, op. cit., I., pp. 264 ff. [4] Ibid., pp. 268–9.
[5] Boissier, Vol. I., p. 32. Rawlinson, op. cit., p. 238.

the divinities within whose sphere such duty fell; and such injuries they avenged by the punishment of the culprit. Whilst Jupiter punished the perjurer, the matron who failed in conduct incurred the wrath of Juno, his spouse, and the severe Vesta pursued the maiden who incurred her anger. Whilst the Greek found nothing but conflict between his moral nature and the popular polytheism, the Roman's less unworthy conception of the divinity, if it did not assist, at least placed no obstacle to the development of what Mommsen terms "that profound moral impulse which leads men to bring earthly guilt and earthly punishment into relation with the world of gods, and to view the former as a crime against the gods.[1] The assumed relation of man to God was hostile to the growth of any profound sense of sin. The Roman recognized the law of morality in his own rational nature, and, devoid of any philosophic turn of mind, after presuming that the same attitude towards good and bad was a characteristic of the divine nature, he never troubled himself to consider whether the repugnance to evil was an essential of the divine nature or not. The consciousness of sin, so often manifested in Egyptian prayers and hymns, even among the Greeks in the mysteries, scarcely displays itself in ancient Rome. Yet, however stifled it might be by the formalism of religion and the utilitarian bent of the national character, it was not entirely absent. Occasionally when we find some untoward event, a plague or some other natural calamity, oppressed the people, they felt that a barrier of some kind had arisen between them and the favor of the gods. "At such times," says Rawlinson, "a sense of guilt arose, and pressed heavily on the conscience of the Romans; they could not doubt that heaven was angry with them; they did not dare to dispute that the divine wrath was provoked by their sin. Then sacrifice, which

[1] History of Rome, Vol. I., p. 232.

in Rome was generally mere thank-offering, took the character of an atonement or expiation."[1] But there is no stress laid on the interior disposition; the mercantile spirit dominates throughout. The gravity of the god's anger being measured by the greatness of the calamity, it is assumed that an offering proportionately precious, restoring the legal equilibrium, will receive due consideration from the divinity. The relatively pure religious belief, and the conviction of a divine sanction, even though it was of such a servile character, proved beneficial to morals. Polybius bears testimony to the relatively moral conception of the divinities; and he testifies that the Roman belief in a divine guardianship over morals resulted in a high ethical condition among the people, which was recognized by the Greek. He writes: "What has most contributed to the progress of the Roman republic is the opinion which they have of the gods, and the excess of devotion which is blamed among the people is, it seems to me, the chief support of Rome. Religion has acquired over minds an authority and an influence in both public and private concerns so great that it passes imagination. It is with reason that the ancients have spread among the people belief in the gods and the fear of punishment in hell, and it is a great mistake in our age to do away with these feelings."[2] He proceeds to contrast the uprightness of Roman officials with the dishonesty of the Greek. Marriage was clothed with a sanctity which enhanced the dignity of the wife, made divorce a rare occurrence, and ensured the purity of family life. The worship of Vesta and the institution of the Vestal Virgins kept before the mind an ideal of purity which was not counteracted by any obscenity in worship. It was with justice that Tertullian bore testimony to the decency of Numa's religion.

It cannot be determined how far the Roman religious

[1] Op. cit., p. 237.

[2] Polyb., Bk. I., p. 10.

views were the result or the cause of those profound moral convictions so characteristic of the original national character. It is, however, an uncontroverted fact that, in the history of this people, a relatively pure religious belief went hand in hand with a correspondingly high moral code. Whilst in Greece these two grand factors in human life mutually depraved each other, among the Romans, at first, they acted and reacted on each other to the advantage of both. Subsequently, a concurrent deterioration set in, which ran its course till both morality and religion fell to a condition more deplorable, if possible, than that which took place in Greece. In the train of Hellenistic culture and philosophy entered Greek mythology. Most of the old Roman gods became identified with Greek divinities; and were accredited with whatever immoralities poetry and legend have ascribed to the latter. New gods and new rites became familiar to the people. The conquests of Rome resulted in the introduction from the Orient of religions which, by the perversion of symbolism, and the immoral condition of these countries, were in the lowest stage of corruption. Polytheism of every shade prevailed. The demoralization of the religious idea invoked, as it had done in Greece, scepticism. Ennius inspired by Euhemerus attacked the existence of the gods. "The simple juxtaposition of many forms of worship," says Lecky, "effected what could not have been effected by the most sceptical literature and the most audacious philosophy. The moral influence of religion was almost annihilated. The feeling of reverence was almost extinct.—The idea of sanctity was so far removed from the popular divinities that it became a continual complaint that prayers were offered which the most depraved would blush to pronounce aloud." [1]

Augustus, alarmed at the injury which the unbounded

[1] History of European Morals, Vol. I., p. 169.

licentiousness was working in both public and private life, made strenuous efforts to restore morality; and the most efficacious means at his disposal he judged to be the restoration of the ancient religion. But his efforts had only a partial and temporary effect. The foreign gods and the immoral mythology had entered into the Roman worship, "and the apotheosis of the emperors consummated its degradation." The divergent lines which the human mind in Greece took to find a way out of the impossible situation, when the rational dictates of morality found an antagonistic influence in religion, displayed itself also in Rome. Indeed the Roman development is but a reflection of the Greek. Among the philosophers, Lucretius denied the existence of the gods and the immortality of the soul. As he was consistently bound to do, he adopted the ethics of Epicurus. His arguments against the existence of God, which he based on a material conception of the universe, have been stated with a force which no modern materialist has improved upon. That scepticism must have widely prevailed, we may judge by the fact that Cæsar in full senate expressed his doubt of a future life.[1] How far this scepticism entered into the popular life it is not easy to determine. The fact of a number of philosophers or poets making a profession of disbelief is quite consistent with the existence of a widespread religious faith in the people, as we know from the conditions prevalent in the modern world. Nor does the profession of free-thinking prove that a man has got rid of the religious tendency common to humanity. It would be easy to illustrate from Roman sources the remark of Duruy, that superstition and free-thinking keep house together in certain minds.[2] In the writings of Cicero, with whom, as St. Augustin observes, Latin philosophy begins and ends,[3]

[1] See Boissier, I., Chap. II. [2] See Boissier, I., pp. 59, 60.
[3] Contra Acad., I. 8. Migne: P. L. XXXII., Col. 910.

the efforts towards the moralization of the Divinity is conspicuous. He believes in the existence of God, the Creator of the universe, upon whom man depends. He proves the existence of God by an appeal to the universality of religion. The difference between right and wrong is eternal as God Himself, and is expressed in the rational mind; the soul survives the body, nay, he says, what we call death is but the commencement of true life,—"Tum denique vivemus, nam haec quidem vita mors est."[1] Though the passage in which he expresses the nature of the moral law, and its essential connection with future retribution, has become a commonplace of ethical writers, it is so profoundly beautiful as to invite repetition:—"Est quidem vera lex recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna . . . nec est alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc et alia posthac, sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una lex et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium, Deus; ille legis hujus inventor disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit ipse se fugit, ac naturam hominis aspernatus, hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiamsi cætera supplicia quae putantur effugerit."[2]

The poetry of Virgil breathes a higher moral and religious spirit. Though in the Georgics he pays a tribute to the philosophy of Lucretius, who "could trample under foot the terrors of the future, and the din of Acheron,"[3]—and this tribute seems to be nothing more than a graceful compliment of one literary man to another—he himself sticks to the old religion. The Æneid is a religious poem in which are enshrined all the gods, and almost all the ceremonies and rites of Roman worship. Though compelled by the exigencies of poetry, and out of deference to the popular

[1] Tusc., I. 31.

[2] From a fragment of De Re Publica, quoted by Lactantius, Inst. VI. 8. Migne, P. L. VI., Col. 660–661. [3] Georg. II. 490.

notions, to reproduce the marvellous elements of mythology, he transforms them for the better. Though he introduces the gods as interfering in the affairs of men, yet, instead of enlarging upon this anthropomorphic view, he relates such intervention very briefly, and in a somewhat apologetic form. The gods are endowed with dignity; their frailties and amours are kept out of sight. The shameless Aphrodite is converted from the lascivious queen of love to the Alma Mater, displaying the deepest maternal affection for her grave and pious son. Jupiter is the god who rules with providential care the world of men. The councils of the gods, instead of being a bacchanalian orgy, are a meeting of potent, grave and reverend Signors. Piety and upright conduct are the passports to divine favor. The future life, with its retribution for conduct, is fully described in the sixth book. There we find two different conceptions of the life after death, one coming from Greek sources, and another reflecting old Roman beliefs. The whole gist of Virgil's teaching is expressed in the line "Imprimis venerari Deos." With a delicate touch of irony, he illustrates the insincerity of atheistical professions. When Mezentius, the scoffer at the gods, hears of his son's death, his first movement is to raise his hands imploringly to heaven. In their noble conceptions of God, their views of morality and its dependence on the religious ideal, amid the gross traditions of polytheism, Virgil and Cicero seem, amid the dark night of paganism, to catch a glimmer of the dawn which preceded the rising of the sun upon those who dwelt in the valley of the shadow.

Seneca, who affected the Stoic doctrine, and professed to be above all a teacher of virtue, can hardly be said to have consistently held to any precise view upon the nature of God and the immortality of the soul. It would be easy, by pursuing the favorite method of the ex-

ponents of religious origins, who pick out such data as strengthen their theory and ignore everything that tells against it, to prove Seneca a sceptic, a pantheist, or a monotheist who looks to God for his reward. His constant protests against the absurdities of mythological paganism recommended him to the Fathers of the Church. But he is a doubtful ally of religion; for he rails at the exhibition of all religious worship. At one time he consoles a mother bewailing the loss of her child, with the reflection that as death has annihilated her boy, he cannot be unhappy; and a little after he bids her be glad because the child has gone to join the just in heaven.[1] Elsewhere he speaks of the day of death as the birthday ushering us into the splendor of divine light.[2] His writings are so full of noble moral maxims, that many have thought him to have received a knowledge of Christianity. He was, according to some, among those of Cæsar's household to whom St. Paul sent his good wishes. But his lofty teachings form no consistent whole, for his failure to connect them with religion, or even with a philosophy resolving the great questions of man's origin and destiny, deprive them of any solid, unifying basis.[3]

The number of those who were influenced by philosophy must have formed but a small section of the population. In the decay of the old religion, multitudes sought to find in the Oriental religions the satisfaction of their religious aspiration; and a large portion of the uneducated, who are but little given to making the nature of their beliefs a subject of reflection, must, as Duruy says, have retained "the Lares and Penates and (their) faith in Jupiter Optimus, Maximus who reigned in the Capitol, and who caused Rome to rule over the world."[4]

To conclude, the moral life of the Romans was very

[1] Consol. ad Marciam.
[2] See Epist. 102, 126.
[3] Boissier, II., Chap. III., IV.
[4] Hist. of Rome, II., p. 295.

clearly connected with their religious belief; they bear witness to the common tendency of the human mind and heart to look for the chief sanction of morality in religion. The Roman was more occupied about the administration and enjoyment of the things of this world than about the rewards and punishments of the next. Yet a belief in the next life, and the accompanying conviction of future rewards and punishments, were a part of his moral make-up. Whilst the ancient religion, with its reverential attitude towards the deity, held its ground, it formed an efficient groundwork for the support of the moral code. When this support failed, morality entered upon a period of disintegration. There were other causes, no doubt, which conspired to bring about that universal corruption of society which is attested not merely by the satirical poets but by grave historians. But Augustus, who was a shrewd and profound statesman, and who must have had as clear an insight into the causes of the deterioration of morals, as can writers of the nineteenth century, has, by the nature of the measures which he instituted for the reform of morals, recorded his judgment that in Roman life religion was the safeguard of morality. The closing years of the Republic and the dawn of the Empire witnessed a condition of confusion and contradiction in both the moral and religious life. Whilst a few minds were rising to higher things, errors were multiplying, and the religious beliefs were dissolving. The advance of enlightenment and reflection and the teachings of experience brought a clearer insight into the line which divides right from wrong. But this advance in ethical knowledge was accompanied by no practical results, for morality was becoming more and more corrupt. The attitude of enlightened paganism towards the moral life is summed up in the words of one of her own poets,—"Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor."

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CHAPTER VII.

MAHOMETANISM.

THE characteristic feature of Mahometanism, as embodied in the Koran, is an intense monotheism, in opposition to both polytheism and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. "God there is none but He, the living and self-subsistent. He is what is in the heavens, and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him, except by His permission? 'He knows what is before and what is behind them. And they comprehend not aught of His knowledge but what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth."[1] "He is the Creator who created the heavens and the earth in truth, and on the day when He says BE, then it is."

Idolatry and polytheism are the unpardonable sin: "Verily God forgives not associating anything else with Him; but He pardons anything else short of that."[2] "Take not two gods; God is only one: one then do ye fear."[3] "Rate not God with other gods, or ye will sit despised and forsaken."[4]

Though inexorably severe towards infidelity, God is otherwise merciful and forgiving; almost every chapter the Koran begins with an invocation of the merciful God; and through the entire book frequent exhortations to penance and prayer as efficacious means of obtaining mercy abound. The essential feature of the religion, as it bears on conduct, is the inculcation of absolute resignation to God's will; the name of Islam, as the Koran expounds it, meaning resignation to God's will.[5] The

[1] The Qu'ran: C. 2: 257. [2] 4: 116. [3] 16: 53.
[4] 17: 24. [5] 2: 105.

doctrine of predestination prevails in its most exaggerated form. Though God is invoked as merciful and tender, the exhibition of those qualities does not extend to all men. Those who reach salvation do so through the special decree of God. Some He has created for happiness; but "for hell many of the ginn, and of mankind."[1] The profession of Islam, which is the passport to eternal happiness, comes not from any spontaneous initiative of man's will; but depends upon the call of God; and the unfortunate who are destined to damnation do not receive the invitation:—"Whomsoever God wishes to guide, He expands his breast to Islam; but whomsoever He wishes to lead astray, He makes his breast tight and straight."[2] The Almighty is capricious, increasing, if it so pleases Him, the joy of the elect[3] and the torments of the reprobate,[4] guiding some to grace, others to destruction.[5]

Man's welfare, then, depends not upon himself, but upon the decree of his fate "which is fixed about his neck."[6] The doctrine of predestination, if logically acted upon, would make good and bad conduct equally indifferent as far as the final result is concerned, since the outcome is determined in advance. It also strikes at human free will, substituting for it an inevitable determinism. But these consequences are so repugnant to reason that even when predestination is theoretically held, its logical consequences are rejected. Evil is forbidden, good enjoined; exhortation and threats are employed to enforce the moral law. Reward and praise assigned to good conduct, punishment and blame to wickedness. Promises of paradise for good conduct, and the punishment of hell for the wicked, are interspersed throughout the Koran. Yet, though this insistence on good conduct is continually apparent, when the frequent

[1] The Qu'ran, 7: 178. [2] 6: 125. [3] 11: 110.
[4] 17: 56. [5] 17: 99. [6] 17: 4.

assertions of the inexorable predetermination of God, and of the all-sufficiency of faith in Islam are duly weighed, the impression made on the mind by a study of the Koran is that heaven is for the believer and hell for the infidel.

The moral sanction consists chiefly in the condition which in the next life will be the result of conduct here. In many chapters, especially in the thirteenth, the chapter of Thunder, there are descriptions of the general judgment which shall follow the resurrection of the dead. Those who fulfil God's covenant and break not the compact, and those who attain what God has bidden to be attained, and dread their Lord, and fear the evil reckoning up; and those who are patient, and steadfast in prayer, and give alms, shall have the recompense of the abode.[1]

The delights of paradise are pictures of the sensual imagination: "Around the fellows of the right hand shall go eternal youths, with goblets and ewers and cups of flowing wine and fruits, such as they deem the best, and flesh of fowl as they desire, and bright and large-eyed maids, like hidden pearls, and virgins for the fellows of the right."[2]

With the arbitrary character assigned to the divine will, and gratuitous predestination to hell or heaven, there could not be any recognition of an absolute, essential distinction between right and wrong. We find in the Koran no conception of moral evil as something repugnant to the divine nature; nor in the ninety-nine names of God, as found in the Koran, is there one conveying the idea of Holiness.[3] All depends upon arbitrary enactment; evil is not forbidden in consequence of its malice; but it is made evil by being prohibited. The doctrine alleged, without reason, by Mr. Spencer and others, to be common to all forms of the Christian religion is exactly the ethical theory of the Koran—moral distinctions depend entirely

[1] The Qu'ran, 13 : 20.

[2] See Chaps. 56, 78, 30.

[3] See S. B. E., Vol. VI., Introd., pp. 67–68.

upon divine positive and arbitrary enactment. The prophet himself was much too busy a man to have any time for ethical speculation. The presence of this view of the distinction between good and evil arose not from philosophic reflection, but from a practical necessity for justifying his own conduct. When he was desirous of freeing himself from some restrictions imposed upon marriage, in parts of the Koran already revealed to him and promulgated by him, he had another revelation, in which God granted to him, above all other believers, the special, personal privilege of "marrying any believing woman, if she gave herself to the prophet, if the prophet desired to marry her,"—a privilege of which he extensively availed himself.[1] Subsequently, too, when he had violated his oath, he declared that his conduct had been authorized by God.

There is but one sin which seems to be considered intrinsically wrong,—the denial of faith. This conduct of the prophet profoundly influenced the spirit of Mahometan religion and law; and its influence is still predominant. In his able paper on the Points of Contact between Christianity and Mahometanism, read at the Chicago Congress, Dr. Washburn, a competent observer, states that "Mahometan law is based on the theory that right and wrong depend on legal enactment, and Mahometan thought follows the same direction. An act is right because God has commanded it. God may abrogate or change His laws, so that what was wrong may become right. Moral acts have no inherent moral character, and what may be wrong for one may be right for another. So, for example, it is impossible to discuss the moral character of the prophet with an orthodox Moslem, because it is a sufficient answer to any criticism to say that God commanded or expressly forbade these acts which in others would be wrong."[2]

[1] The Qu'ran, 33: 49.

[2] World's Parliament of Religions, Vol. I., pp. 565 ff.

The practical moral code coincides, to a great extent, with that of the Old Testament. Adultery and fornication are treated as crimes ;[1] just dealing in all transactions is enjoined ;[2] usury is forbidden ;[3] great stress is laid frequently upon almsgiving, which ought to extend its benevolence even to the "Son of the Road," and hypocritical motives in such good works are sternly reprehended.[4] Prayer, fasting and pilgrimage are insisted upon.[5] Polygamy, almost unrestricted, is permitted ; for besides wives, "by twos, by threes, by fours," the number of concubines a man may keep is limited only by the extent of his ability to support them ; and a husband may with little or no restriction divorce a wife.[6]

It has often been asserted that Islam denies woman a soul and the hope of everlasting bliss. This allegation, which was widely circulated among English-speaking people when Byron was the popular poet, is unfounded. In this regard the believing woman is placed on the same level as the believing man.[7] Yet the toleration, and not merely toleration, which the Koran everywhere extends to concubinage and polygamy, consecrated by the prophet's example, could not fail to result in the degradation of woman. Her condition, with the concomitant evils of slavery, and the identification of religion with despotic political power, have rendered Mahometanism a force hostile to civilization. The conviction that in the Koran, interpreted to the letter, is to be found the entire religious, moral and legal codes, offers an almost insurmountable bar to any advance in civilization or progress in morality.

Yet, with all its drawbacks, the inherent strength which lies in its uncompromising monotheism has saved Mahometanism from the corruptions which have overtaken so many other Oriental religions. Among its followers have been many men of the noblest character ; its annals

[1] The Qu'ran, 27 : 34. [2] 17 : 35. [3] 33 : 36 ff.
[4] 2 : 225, 265. [5] 4 : 10. [6] 2 : 236 ff. [7] 30 : 55.

afford instances of the severest asceticism and practical benevolence. Wherever it has prevailed—and it counts its members by millions, nay by hundreds of millions, spread over some of the fairest lands from the Danube to the Pacific Ocean,—from the day on which Bilal first called the faithful to prayer, it has been professed by a very considerable number of the human race. Everywhere and always it has consistently stood for the truth that God is One, that human conduct is vigilantly scanned by the All-Seeing Eye, and that in a life to come the good and evil which men have done during their earthly existence will meet with appropriate retribution.

Source: The Koran.

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CHAPTER VIII.

SEMI-CIVILIZED AND SAVAGE RACES.

§ 1. *Celts, Teutons, Slavs.*

THE information which we have concerning the original religions of the three branches of the great Aryan family, the Celts, Teutons and Slavs, is fragmentary and unsatisfactory. A few occasional notices of Roman writers offer the most reliable testimony available concerning the native cults of these peoples. A great deal of what comes to us through early Christian times is already colored with the influences of Christianity; and the same may be said of the folk-lore, songs, and traditions which have been preserved. In the dearth of any accurate information it is difficult to determine the ethical aspect of the religious belief.

The most reliable data concerning the Celts of Gaul are given by Julius Cæsar,[1] while the Germania of Tacitus affords the greater part of what we know concerning the Teutonic race.

The account given by the former of the position of the Druids in Gaul indicates clearly that religion entered largely into the life of the people. The Druids did not form a caste, as did the Brahmans of India, but were a corporation, possessing a secret doctrine, and wielding extensive political power. Cæsar mentions that they attended to the sacrifices, which were numerous and bloody; they decreed rewards and punishments. The severest punishment which they could inflict was to excommunicate the culprit, who then became an outcast, and was

[1] De Bello Gallico, C. 13 ff.

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looked upon as a wicked person to be shunned by the community.

The Druids exercised everywhere, in Ireland and Gaul, the highest jurisdiction; enforcing the laws which held society together. Their character as the chosen representatives of the deity invested them with such unlimited authority that the constitution of the Gauls was, to a great extent, a theocracy.

That the deities were supposed to be interested in morality is further attested by the subsequent statement of Cæsar, who writes that the sacrifice especially pleasing to the gods was that of malefactors who had been guilty of robbery, theft or any other offence. Sacrifices were offered to obtain from the gods protection from diseases, help in dangers and success in battles.

There was in the Celts' mind everywhere, in Gaul as in Ireland, a profound conviction of immortality. Cæsar states that the Druids were anxious above all things to instil into the minds of the people the conviction that the human soul does not become extinct, but passes after death from one body into another.[1] This assertion is confirmed by Mela and Lucan. The doctrine of the Druids concerning the other life, however, differed entirely from that of Pythagoras. For the Celtic conception was that of a continued existence in another life. There is nowhere any proof that a precise notion of future retribution existed. Indeed D'Arbois asserts that this conception was entirely absent in the Celtic mind. The Celts everywhere conceived the next life, he says, as a second edition of the present, without corrections.[2]

While the belief in a future retribution may not have been a part of their religion, the importance which they assigned to sacrifices of expiation, together with the moral authority which they acknowledged in the Druids, sufficiently

[1] Cours de la Litterature, Vol. I., Liv. I., Chap. V. See Döllinger, Bk. 7, § 163.

[2] Cycle Mythologique, Chap. XV., S. 3.

proves that the Celts believed that the ways of men were subject to the laws of the Divinity.

In the investigation of ancient Teutonic religion, we find some evidence among Roman writers besides Tacitus: Dio, Vellius and Marcellinus contribute a little. In the works of Are, an Icelander who wrote in the twelfth century, as well as in the Older and the Later Edda, of the same period, and the Historia Danica of Saxo, written in the thirteenth century, many very ancient songs, lays, traditions and customs are preserved. But in almost all of these Christian influence is distinctly traceable. The ancient German religion was mainly nature worship derived probably from the original Aryan worship reflected in the Rig Veda. Tacitus mentions three gods especially venerated, whom he identifies with the Roman Mercury, Hercules and Mars. Cæsar remarks that the Germans did not practise sacrifice as the Gauls did. But Tacitus who wrote one hundred and fifty years later mentions sacrifices as a part of the religious rites. The priest accomplished the acts of religion in the name of the state. Among the Germans the priests did not form a hierarchy as did the Druids; though there are some traces of a hereditary priesthood.[1] The priests by means of divination sought to know the will of the gods. A part of their official duty was to execute traitors and criminals, as an expiation offered to the divinities offended by crime. While there is no evidence that any belief in future retribution existed in the early times, such a conviction is found at least in the eighth century, and we may conclude that some vague form of it antedated that period. One of the best informed authorities on the subject, York Powell, writes: "As to punishment after death, as early as the eighth century there was a wide-spread belief that the worst evildoers, such as perjurers, murderers, persons of foul life,

[1] See Döllinger: Ibid., § 172; and York Powell: Teutonic Heathendom, p. 284.

and traitors, would meet with a fit recompense in the next world."[1] In the Edda, Valhalla, or the heaven where courage—in the estimate of the Norseman, the supreme virtue of man—meets its reward, is frequently alluded to. Death in battle was the passport to the abode of happiness, while the man who died a natural death was consigned to the kingdom of gloom presided over by the Goddess Hel, from which name is derived the English word hell. There is also found a description of Ragnarok, or the day of final judgment in the earlier Edda. The good are to be rewarded in a paradise of sensual delights, whilst a hell of torment shall be the part of the wicked.

These traditions are undoubtedly colored by the minds of the Christian writers who have preserved them. But they would never have been produced if some basis for them had not been supplied in the authentic traditions of the people.

That there existed among the Germans, from the earliest time, a sense of the divine sanction of the moral law is shown also by the various ways in which they appealed to the deity for the vindication of innocence and right, or for the manifestation of guilt. The duel, trial by battle, various kinds of ordeals, divination to learn the will of the gods, all imply a sense of an overruling providence that makes the life and conduct of man its concern. Tacitus mentions the case of a trial by battle; and relates how a duel between two soldiers from opposite sides was taken as an omen of the result of the war.[2]

Oaths were taken with a solemn religious formality, implying an appeal to heaven. The ordeal survived in early Anglo-Saxon laws, as an appeal to the judgment of God. It was with difficulty, and only after centuries of opposition, that the Church extirpated many superstitious forms of this practice, so wide-spread among European peoples. Traces of it have survived in the practice of duelling.

[1] Döllinger, p. 281. [2] German. X.

Of the original Slavonic religion we know scarcely anything except what can be gleaned here and there from such precarious sources as disconnected traditions, preserved among widely-separated branches of the race from Bulgaria to the Baltic. Scholars have endeavored to trace to Vedic sources the gods worshipped by the Slavs. Svarog has been identified with Varuna, and the Greek Uranos; Perun with Parganja, supposed to be another name for Indra. This god, known as the thunder god, was widely worshipped by both branches of the race, the South-eastern and the Western Slavs. He is frequently designated as Triglav, or the Three-headed. Two other divinities were worshipped, Radgost and Svantovit. The temple of the latter in Rugen was a building of great magnificence, which was the last stronghold of Slavonic heathendom till it was overthrown by Christian missionaries.

Some writers, among others Maclear, relying probably on the authority of Erben, hold that there was a well-pronounced dualism in Slavonic religion. This, however, is denied by Leger, who declares that no sufficient evidence exists for this opinion. In his short but scholarly sketch of Slavonic religion, he indicates that prayer and sacrifice were employed to propitiate the divinities. There existed a belief in a future life; and the notion of it included a place of reward for the good; though, he says, the hell which is referred to in some of the traditions is to be ascribed to Christian ideas.

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§ 2. *Other semi-civilized and savage races.*

If we look in the lives of all savage peoples for any well-defined acknowledgment of a divine sanction for conduct we certainly cannot find it. Or if we restrict the meaning of morality so that it expresses an ethical condition at least approximating to that of civilized nations, there will be found no religious sanction for morality, because morality in this sense of the word is wanting in savage life. In summing up his conclusions Tylor writes: "To some the statement may seem startling, yet the evidence seems to justify it, that the relation of morality to religion is one that only belongs in its rudiments, or not at all, to rudimentary civilization."[1] A rudimentary display of the tendency to seek a religious sanction is, on the contrary, what we should expect to be the normal condition, when the notions of both morality and of religion are but crude and rudimentary. When the conceptions of the Deity are of the most erroneous character, there cannot be anything

[1] Primitive Culture, Vol. II., p. 360.

approaching to a well-defined conviction that in it is to be found the rule of right and the source of obligation. Nor if idol worship of the most debased kind exists can there be any consistent belief that there is a divine sanction of conduct. In one form or another, however, the lowest savages evince the tendency to connect their moral code, of whatever kind it may be, with a superior sanction.

Among many savages the moral standard approves as good the conduct which promotes the welfare of the tribe; courage, prowess, skill in hunting, are among the first of virtues. When along with this view of morality there exists a belief that men who have displayed these qualities will alone pass on to continued existence, or will enjoy, in another world common to all, a higher measure of pleasure, there is in such belief a rudimentary form of the general tendency to connect good conduct with future reward. The way in which the belief in a superior sanction is manifested varies with the variety of religious notions; but traces of it are to be found throughout the world, even among the most degraded specimens of the race.

The belief in retribution after death, if not universal, has been found among almost all, and the evidence for its absence in some tribes is negative. In many instances the hasty opinion formed by some travellers have been corrected by the subsequent observations of others; and, as the conditions of uncivilized life became better known by thorough observation, the belief in a future life is found to be held by various tribes who were hitherto supposed to be devoid of it. Among the American Indians the belief in immortality is everywhere found. Recent authorities confirm the statement of Charlevoix, who wrote: "The belief the best established among our American Indians is that of the immortality of the soul."[1]

[1] Journal Historique, p. 351 (Paris, 1740). Quoted by Brinton: Myths, p. 271.

One exception Brinton believes to have existed; that of the Lower Pend d'Oreilles of Oregon. These natives have some religious notions; and in the face of the universality of the belief in immortality shared in even by other Indians of the California coast, who, as Brinton remarks, were as near beasts as men ever became, we may reasonably doubt if it was entirely absent in these Oregonians.[1]

The belief in immortality carries almost invariably along with it some theory of a future retribution for conduct. These beliefs frequently do not involve any clear conception of a hell for the wicked, and heaven to which moral worth alone is the passport. We may admit with Brinton that, often, no contrast is discoverable between a place of torment and a realm of joy. But the savage who believes that even "a negative castigation awaits the liar, the coward or the niggard," is not entirely devoid of the notion of a future in which good will be rewarded and evil punished.[2] When Brinton and Tylor affirm that the conception of future retribution is absent in many savages, they seem to mean by the term a well-defined, consistent notion of future reward and punishment, meted out according to a strictly ethical estimate of moral values. Such a conception could arise only when the moral and religious development would have attained a much higher level than that prevailing among many tribes and races.

When Brinton denies that the races of Mexico and Peru had any idea of a place of moral retribution, he must have in view some highly theological conception, or his opinion is inconsistent with the result of researches made by ethnologists and historians of acknowledged authority. The Marquis de Nadaillac declares that "the Peruvians distinguished the intelligent and immaterial soul (runa) from the body, the name of which (allpacamasca), animated earth, is characteristic. They

[1] Myths, p. 272. [2] Ibid., p. 283.

believed in a future life; and the man who had well employed the time of his mortality went, after death, to the Hananpacha, the world above, where he awaited his reward. If, on the contrary, he led a bad life he was flung into the Urupacha, or the world below."[1] Among the Mexicans a very definitely conceived belief in a future life pervaded their religious worship. Their notion of God was highly ethical; for they conceived moral evil to be a sin deserving of everlasting punishment, which, however, might be remitted through the mercy of God, moved by penance and confession. The prayers of the priest and the penitent, preserved by Sahagun, are given by Bancroft.[2] In them the ideas of sin, retribution, the efficacy of penance, are clearly expressed. Indeed the spirit of the prayers bears so close a resemblance to Catholic doctrine that Sahagun has been suspected of reading into the original texts a highly subjective interpretation, much after the fashion in which constructors of theories of religious development handle savage psychology. But even though we make the most liberal deductions on account of any Christian coloring that may have been imparted by the mind of the translator, enough evidence remains in the prayers to establish the prevalence of a belief in future retribution. Unless the prayers are as rank a forgery as Chatterton's *Battle of Hastings*, which nobody ventures to say, they testify to the Mexicans' belief in future retribution.

The belief in another existence where the good are rewarded and the wicked punished Bancroft shows to have been shared by North American tribes all over the continent. "It has been supposed by some," he writes, "that the idea of future punishment and reward was unknown to the Americans. This is certainly an error, for some of the Pacific Coast tribes had very definite ideas of future

[1] Prehistoric America, pp. 435–436. See p. 299.

[2] Native Races, Vol. III., pp. 200–223.

retribution, and almost all, in supposing that the manner of death influenced the future state of the deceased, implied a belief in a future reward at least."[1] He reproduces at great length the various notions of the future state current among the Chippewayans, Chinooks, Nez-percés, Flatheads, Californians, Thlascaltes, Nicaraguans and many other tribes.[2]

In every region of the globe tribes in the most degraded condition are found in possession of some convictions concerning a religious sanction. The Dyaks of Borneo occupy a very low place in the anthropological scale, yet they are sufficiently rational to believe in a future retribution; they say that when the smoke of the funeral pile ascends, the soul of the good man mounts to heaven, that of the wicked goes down to hell.[3] The Guinea Negro believes in a judgment after death which shall result for the good in admission to happiness, for the bad in destruction.[4]

In many other instances, among savage tribes considered to be the lowest specimens of the race, the testimony to the ethical character of their religious ideas is found in the belief which they entertain in a temporal sanction for conduct. Storms, sickness, death, are looked upon as the punishment of bad actions.[5] Among the Fuegians, the deity, "the big man in the woods," is believed to send storm and rain in punishment of murder and theft.[6] The Australian native, who has been frequently represented as having neither religion nor morality, turns out to have very definite ideas upon both; and furthermore connects them in his mind very closely. In the chapter entitled *High Gods of Low Races*, in his recent work, Mr. Lang, to refute the opinions of Huxley and others, adduces the testimony of Mr. Howitt, who has had exceptionally favor-

[1] Native Races, Vol. II., pp. 510, 511.
[2] Ibid., Chap. XII.
[3] Tylor, op. cit., II., p. 92.
[4] Ibid., p. 23.
[5] See Jevons: Introduction, etc., p. 111,
[6] Schneider, p. 68.

able opportunities of becoming acquainted with the Australian native's belief. Coupled with the testimony of Brough Smith and Taplin, Howitt's vindicates this much-maligned savage, who looks to the deity for the sanction of a moral code which embraces "respect for old age, abstinence from lawless love, and avoidance of the sin so popular, poetic, and sanctioned by the example of gods, in classical Greece."[1] In Tylor's scholarly work there is an immense amount of data, gathered from the most reliable sources, showing the belief in future, and temporal reward coming from the deity; or from whatever being is taken as the object of religious worship. One has but to read the works of Waitz, Schneider, and other anthropologists, to find that over the entire world the existence of a religious sanction of conduct is a firm article of savage belief.

Another evidence of the presence in religion of an ethical character is the universl, or almost universal, custom of appeals to oaths and ordeals. Both the oath and the ordeal imply that there is some Superior Being who is interested in the observance of truthfulness, justice, honesty; and who will punish the violation of these virtues. These institutions prevail in various forms among almost all savage races. Frequently they degenerate into the grossest forms of superstition, and assume an irrational character. Yet they testify to an innate tendency in man to acknowledge a Supreme Being, who is the source and sanction of righteousness.[2]

Another evidence of the universal tendency to recognize an unseen and mysterious authority imposing, under penalties which may not be evaded, laws for the regulation of human conduct, exists in the universal prevalence among the lower races of the institution called Taboo.

[1] See Lang: The Making of Religion, pp. 188–9.

[2] See Oaths and Ordeals: E. B. Tylor, Eclectic Magazine, 87, 59. Trials by Ordeal: Chambers' Edinburgh Magazine; 63, 363.

The word is of Polynesian origin, but the institution is world-wide. Everywhere among savage tribes there is an unwritten law which imposes under the direst penalties all kinds of restriction upon conduct. The use of certain foods is forbidden; contact with certain objects, or persons, is to be shunned perpetually, or temporarily; specified actions are to be performed or omitted. An enumeration of all the things to which Taboo extends would be well-nigh impossible. Very often the restrictions it imposes are of the most irksome character, and inflict a considerable amount of hardship and suffering. Yet they seldom involve any direct consideration of utility; and can be accounted for on no rational principle. Still they appeal to the savage mind with all the force of dread authority. As the shadow follows the substance, punishment of the severest character is expected to attend violation of Taboo. In many instances the ordinances of Taboo are a direct gain to morality; as, for example, when they enforce respect for marital rights. Occasionally, too, they may be traced to a religious source. The value of Taboo, however, as a testimony to the connection in the human mind between religion and morality, lies in the fact that its universal prevalence indicates, even in the lowest development of reason, an irresistible tendency to acknowledge some mysterious power which pronounces *Thou shalt* or *Thou shalt not*, with an authority that may not be gainsaid.[1]

We may conclude that even in the lowest races there is not wanting some manifestation of the instinct which finds a conscious and deliberate expression in the belief universal among the higher religions, that conduct is a concern of religion; and that its supreme sanction is derived from the Deity. The belief in retribution grows clearer and stronger, as reason develops from a lower to a higher degree of culture. As enlightenment unfolds the

[1] See Jevons, op. cit., pp, 58–82.

consequences of action, and the restrictions imposed on conduct by the requirements of rational life, the authority of duty is, in a proportionate degree, traced beyond the bounds of this visible world to the mysterious First Cause who has fashioned natures as they are. Ignorance and degradation may stifle, but they never destroy the moral and religious germs. Even there were found some tribe of beings so wretched that this common characteristic of mankind did not show itself, even in a rudimentary form in their consciousness, the fact would only attest that they had sunk below the level of rationality, except in so far as they were still capable of rising above their present condition. And since a development from the lower to the higher condition of rational life is attended by a development of the belief in a religious sanction, we must inevitably conclude that this conviction finds its congenial soil in the nature of the rational being.

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CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION FROM THE HISTORICAL SURVEY.

THE first and most obvious lesson to be drawn from an examination of the religious beliefs that have prevailed among the different groups of the human family, is that, in considering the problem in its bearings upon conduct, we must distinguish very clearly between religion as the psychological fact, and *a* religion which is one of the varying forms of belief and worship that have been the outcome of that fact. The ignoring of this very simple distinction has given rise to a great deal of confusion, and caused writers on the subject to hold religion itself responsible for results which in justice are attributable, not to it, but to the falsehood which became identified with its concrete expression. The sentiment itself is a phenomenon never absent from human nature that has attained even what must be considered a low grade of normal development. And not alone the theist who recognizes a supremely good Author of the universe, but even the evolutionist who sees no Intelligence behind phenomena, yet holds that natural forces are working towards a higher development of life, must admit that the innate religious impulse is a beneficent factor in human progress. In all the forms in which the religious sentiment has expressed itself, whilst the idea of God has varied, from the crude imagination of the savage or the deification of the generative forces of nature, up to the purest monotheism, whilst hardly another feature is found constant, the belief in a religious sanction for conduct is common to all. Men have conceived the notion

of divine retribution in fashions sharply contradictory; but they have all experienced and given expression to the common impulse urging them to look beyond the visible world for the chief sanction of conduct. In some cases, perhaps, the reward was looked for in this life alone, while the source from which it should come lay outside the sphere of human existence. By an overwhelmingly large proportion of the human race, so large as to be practically all the race, both the sanction and the source have been conceived outside of earthly life. Varuna's realms of light, Ahura Mazda's kingdom, the hell and heaven of Chinese and Mussulman, Hades, Tartarus, the Elysian Fields, metempsychosis, absorption in Nirvana, return to Tao, the Happy Hunting-grounds, the Hall of Osiris, Valhalla, the innumerable crudities which the savage and the barbarian mind have pictured for future punishment and reward, all alike bear witness to the universal instinct of humanity "to trace the hidden equities of divine reward and catch sight, through the darkness, of the fateful threads of woven fire that connect error with its retribution."

Upon this religious sanction have been based the domestic and social codes of mankind. It has been the force which has held men together and made social existence possible. Universal history bears out the conclusion which Mr. Kidd has thus expressed: "We may survey the whole field of man's religions in societies both anterior to and contemporaneous with our modern civilization, and we shall find that all religious belief possesses those characteristic features. There is no exception. Everywhere these beliefs are associated with conduct having a social significance; and everywhere the ultimate sanction which they provide for conduct which they prescribe is a supernatural one." "These beliefs constitute, in short, the natural and inevitable complement of our reason, and so far from being threatened

with eventual dissolution they are apparently destined to continue to grow and develop with the development of society, while always presenting intact and unchangeable the essential feature they all have in common in the ultra-rational sanction they provide for conduct." [1] What has been at all times, in all places, under whatever environment, a steady phenomenon of human nature, must have its root in the nature itself. We may, if we prefer theory to fact, trace all religion to the fear entertained by a savage for his ancestor's ghost; and in a similar spirit we may account for morality, by dilating upon the instinct of dogs or the ejection of a piratical crow from the rookery. But we are still confronted by the intractable fact that, in the human mind, morality and religion are, on one point, indissolubly united, and, until positivist philosophy can reconstruct human nature, it is wasting time in instituting proceedings for divorce. This indisputable consensus of mankind in the belief that a superior being sanctions the moral law, congenital as it is to the human mind, is not to be effaced, and cannot be supplanted. Morality has in the rational nature its own independent root, but it no sooner passes out of the germinative stage, than its tendrils seek the neighboring religious growth, that it may find there the support to which it may cling in its process of development. If it fails to find the trunk on which to lean, unable to support its own weight, its course is one of arrested development and comparative sterility.

The universality of this divine retribution for conduct leads us a step further, for the question arises, is it to be treated as a universal hallucination to which no reality responds, or a testimony of weight to the existence of a reality. The value of this testimony we shall estimate according to the test laid down by Mr. Spencer in his *First Principles*. He established there a criterion by

[1] Social Evolution: Benjamin Kidd, New York, 1894, p. 116.

which we may judge of the value to be given to any universal belief. It is true that in defining this standard he had not in view the particular case which now occupies our attention. But an axiomatic, general principle must hold good for every case to which it applies, or it is no truth at all. In order to extract "the soul of truth from things erroneous," he indicates a reliable method. "This method is to compare all opinions of the same genus, to set aside as more or less discrediting one another those various special and concrete elements in which such opinions disagree; to observe what remains after discordant constituents have been eliminated, and to find for the remaining constituent that abstract expression which holds through its divergent modifications."[1] The value of this principle he thus expresses, with reference to the subject with which he deals: "When duly realized, the general principle above illustrated must lead us to anticipate that the diverse forms of religious belief which have existed and which still exist, have all a basis in some ultimate fact. Judging by analogy the implication is, not that any one of them is altogether right; but that in each of them is something right more or less disguised by other things wrong. It may be that the soul of truth contained in erroneous creeds is very unlike most, if not all, of its several embodiments; and indeed if, as we have good reason to expect, it is much more abstract than any of them, its unlikeness necessarily follows. But, however different from its concrete expressions, some essential verity must be looked for. To suppose that these multiform conceptions should be one and all *absolutely* groundless discredits too profoundly that average intelligence from which all our individual intelligences are inherited."[2] This is sound doctrine; and if Mr. Spencer had been the first to propose it, the world would owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the present of so valuable a principle. But

[1] First Principles, § 2. [2] Ibid., p. 13.

its discovery antedates the Synthetic Philosophy by a good many centuries. The argument from the consensus of mankind is used by the scholastics in proof of the existence of God.

If Spencer had kept this principle in view and applied it to the universal belief in a divine retribution for conduct, he would never have undertaken to construct his ethical system, which is the direct negation of any such sanction. When we compare with one another all the opinions concerning the ultimate outcome of conduct, and set as cancelling one another the various elements in which they disagree, we find a remaining constituent which may be expressed in the abstract form ; the source of retribution of right and wrong lies outside earthly life. Apply this abstract expression of the invariable factor common to all the widely varying forms in which men have conceived the religious sanction, and it will be found to hold through all the divergent modifications.

In the lowest savages where the development of reason is very rudimentary, and the restraints on conduct but few, and requiring but little beyond the instinct of self-preservation for the realization, and where religious notions of a correspondingly crude character accompany them, the connection between religion and morality must necessarily be but dimly apprehended. The knowledge of a relationship cannot be more perfect than the knowledge of the terms. We may easily admit, with Tylor, that some tribes in the lowest grade of culture may be without perception of any religious sanction for conduct ; but if there are any such, the absence of this perception only proves that they are below what Mr. Spencer calls "that average intelligence from which all our intelligences have been inherited." As conduct becomes more rational, as a clearer perception of right and wrong arises and the content of duty enlarges, calling for more effort to overcome the promptings of the lower appetites, the recognition of

the religious sanction becomes more and more prominent. Nor is this argument vitiated by the occasional efflorescence of philosophic scepticism. Some philosophers have been found to deny the existence of a supernatural sanction; but they have been few. Fewer still were those who spoke from conviction; and they will become a yet smaller handful, if we deduct from their number those who, as Plato observed, found the approach of death an efficient solvent of scepticism. A residue may yet stand; but their contradiction of mankind's universal verdict upon the existence of a supernatural sanction no more impairs that testimony than an occasional case of suicide controverts the truth that self-preservation is the primary instinct of sentient existence.

That the influence of the religious sanction, provided reason works out her notion of a supernatural power along the lines of truth, should prove very beneficial to morality is in the very nature of things. To conceive a witness of conduct whose knowledge reaches not alone action, however secret it may be, but even thought, in whose hands are rewards and punishments of the weightiest character, and from whose judgment there is no escape, must help greatly to enforce the judgment of the moral sense. Where even an imperfect approach to monotheism prevailed it was accompanied, as among the ancient Chinese, Egyptians, Zoroastrians, and the people of the Vedas, by a high moral code. But reason did not work out the religious problem along the lines of truth. The most painfully fascinating page of human history is that which relates how she wandered off in every direction, setting up a god on every high hill and under every green tree,—

> "How gave for nought her priceless gift,
> How spoiled the bread and spilt the wine,
> Which, spent with due, respective care,
> Had made brutes men, and men divine."

Erroneous notions of the nature of the divinity were

prolific sources of moral corruption. The deification of physical forces, leading to the worship of fecundity, and the introduction of sex into the conception of the deities, was usually followed or accompanied by the apotheosis of the generative energy of humanity. Symbolism and mythology aggravated the evil, and from these elements sprang profoundly immoral consequences. Religion extended not merely a palliation but a consecration to vice. From another cause, too, the influence of religion proved pernicious. Particular classes have made religion a tool to serve their own ambition and selfish interests. The only blot which Maspéro finds on the moral code contained in *The Book of the Dead* is the trace of priestly cupidity. The outrageous self-assertion of the Brahmanistic caste, arrogating to themselves an identification with the divine nature, and making the slightest infringement on their dignity or material interests a heinous offence, produced a state of affairs which contributed to the rapid success of Buddhism. In Rome, patrician pride, arrogating to itself all the functions of worship, deeply injured the moral influence of religion among the plebeians. The sons of Eli are a cosmopolitan and a perennial race. Yet, after all deductions that must be made on account of the corruption of the religious ideal, of the perversion of religion to the service of selfishness, and the failure of many men to realize in conduct what they theoretically believe—a phenomenon common to all times and to all religions—there remains an enormous balance for good to be placed to the credit of religion. Even the positivist recognizes the truth which has been expressed by Tylor as the conclusion arrived at by his scientific researches through all forms of primitive belief: "On the bright side, as we study the moral standards of the higher nations, and see how the hopes and fears of the life to come have been brought to enforce their teachings, it is plain that, through most widely differing religions, the doctrine of future

judgment has been made to further goodness and check wickedness according to the shifting rules which have divided right from wrong."[1]

To prove the entire independence of religion and morality, the argument is frequently advanced that morality has progressed in spite of religious influences, and, indeed, that a truer insight into moral rectitude has proved a death-blow to religious belief. We have seen this truth very plainly evident in the paganism of Greece and Rome. The advance of enlightenment brought about disbelief in the mythological divinities; but the inference drawn from this fact indicates that confusion of thought already pointed out, which makes religion itself, the religious sentiment in man, synonymous with particular forms of religion. Erroneous beliefs have perished, not because religion and morality are independent in their nature; but precisely because men have agreed in recognizing an intimate connection of one with the other. If I assume a dependence of B. upon A., and they are so constituted that I can more readily, and with more certitude, attain a knowledge of the dependent B., than I can of A., and if an increase in my insight into the nature of B. shows me that B. cannot possibly depend on A., as I understand A., am I therefore obliged to deny the dependence? I may either do so, or I may reconstruct my views on A., so as to bring them into adjustment with my extended knowledge of B. And if I adopt the latter alternative, does it not argue that I hold on tenaciously to the existence of the relationship? And this is precisely the course which the human intellect has taken when morality and religion have come into conflict.

Reason has frequently advanced faster in the moral field than in that of religious speculation. The truth gained in the former she has taken as a light to guide her in the latter; and an advance in morals has produced a purifica-

[1] Primitive Culture, Vol. II., p. 106.

tion in religious beliefs. When reason is left to work out by its own resources the answers to those questions which have at all times imperiously impressed themselves on the human mind: Whence have I come? Whither am I going? How am I to act? the last problem is solved more easily than the former two. The impulse to divide conduct into right and wrong is congenital with the mind itself. The classification of actions under those two heads is made through the interpretation of human nature, its energies, its capacities, and its needs, compared with the nature of all things contained in man's environment. Experience is continually affording light; wrong principles when applied are found to work out to disastrous conclusions. Thus, to a very great extent, though the impulse to assume the principle of causality is just as indigenous to reason as the notion of a right and a wrong, yet when reflection seeks to specify the nature of the cause behind phenomena, sources of error abound on all sides, and the conclusions arrived at are not, like moral principles, subject to the correction of experience. Error once admitted is likely to obtain the approbation of venerable tradition, and becoming crystallized in domestic and national institutions consecrated by the patriotic sentiment, is not easily overthrown.

Reason unaided must, therefore, depend rather on morality for guidance in the conception of the religion, than on the religious light for guidance in morals. From a religion which is the product of the human mind no more can be extracted than the mind has put into it. Of course one generation of men will reap where another has sown. The notion, for example, of Shang-ti, which is revealed in the Shu King, as the pattern of virtue and the promulgator of the law of right and wrong, did not contain any implicit data as to what action was right and what wrong. Reason had to look elsewhere for a practical criterion; and if the Chinese did not derive their concep-

tion of God from an outside source, they first perceived that such an action was good, and only afterwards came to hold it to be, therefore, a part of the heavenly law. Christianity itself has not added very much to the extension of the moral code. Its immense influence for the moral elevation of humanity has been exercised rather by placing duty in a clearer light and giving a profound significance to the basic truths of morality. Revelation has given reason knowledge of the true relation between man and his Creator; it has thereby solved the primary problem of the moral life: what is the end of life? It has given a profound significance to the value of conduct, clothed moral obligation with a sacred inviolability, and offered to man a perfect ideal for conduct. By enlightening the mind upon the things of religion, revelation has offered reason a knowledge of the goal to be reached by life. It has stamped with divine approbation the first principles and the conclusions of right reason. But after thus aiding reason, with a direct assistance in the religious field and an indirect one in the moral, it has left to reason the task of applying its own principles, thus guaranteed to the details of conduct.

The results obtained by examining the relations in which the moral life and the religious bear to each other, as far as our historical survey has gone, are :—

From the constitution of his nature man is a moral and a religious being; the moral sense and the religious spring from his rational nature.

There exists in him an invincible tendency to bring the moral truths into connection with his religious belief, by obtaining or forging a divine sanction for what he conceives to be the law of right and wrong.

Reason reaches more easily, and with less liability to error, the truth which lies in the moral, than those which belong to the religious sphere.

While erroneous forms of religions from the falsehood

which they contain may injure morals, the religious sentiment itself, in the very nature of things, is the most powerful aid to morality.

Hence we must conclude that any theory of Ethics which ignores this primordial tendency of the human mind to seek outside of life the end of life, and to look for the supreme religious sanction of morality, does not respond to human nature.

PART III.—DOCTRINAL.

CHAPTER I.

RELATION OF ETHICS TO MORALITY.

THERE has been, as we have seen, a universal tendency, conscious and unconscious, displayed by the human mind to bring to bear on each other the answers which it has found for itself concerning the origin and end of human life, and the direction of conduct. Whilst reason, by its nature and in virtue of its pre-eminence over the other faculties and activities, dictates a certain course of action to be pursued, and authoritatively declares such a course to be binding on the agent, a concurrent impulse has carried man to recognize that behind this authority of reason, and giving weight to it, lay divine authority. Whilst, however, the chief sanction of moral precepts has been derived from religion, the contents of the moral code have usually been defined by reason itself. Another indisputable fact is that frequently, owing to the perversion of religious notions, morality has been compelled to sustain itself without any assistance from actual or concrete religion. In this condition, it languished indeed, but it endured. Again, some individuals, dispensing with religion, have found other motives sufficient for the observance of duty. These facts lead to the conclusion that between religion and morality there is not a connection such that if the former is withdrawn the latter must completely perish. The rational nature of man is itself a guarantee against such a contingency. The innate propensity of

reason to classify conduct into right and wrong, the existence of a moral judgment affirming some kind of necessity to embrace the right and avoid the wrong, the necessity of observing some rules of morality in order to make social life possible, the consequent enforcement of these rules by social enactment, are elements always present, and, independent of religion, sufficient to constitute a certain measure of morality. As a rational being, man is a moral being; and he may obey his reason, without looking beyond its sanction, and the sanction of his fellowmen. But, whilst this is possible, we have already seen that at no time of the world's history did such a condition prevail. If the advocates of a morality independent of religion were content with showing that, theoretically at least, the elements of morality in an imperfect, inchoate condition may be brought into play in human life without any religious reference, they could easily establish their thesis. But they undertake to prove that the moral life can dispense with religion altogether without suffering any injury; and that morality, independent of religion, has all that is required to constitute its perfection and ensure its efficacious realization in human life. In order to make good this position they must show that, independently of all religious reference, of the existence of God, the moral judgment has an authoritativeness of its own sufficient to claim the obedience of the will. They must show that duty is invested with such a sanctity that its violation is an evil for man greater than all other evils; they must prove that the moral good is of such transcendent excellence that not alone are we justified in sacrificing for it every other good, but that we are bound, not by a mere feeling of preference, but by a tie which holds us even when we should wish to be free, to sacrifice every other desire, good or happiness that is incompatible with the moral good.

Many attempts have been made to establish morality

on an independent basis; but all of them have resulted in dismal failure; and necessarily so. When philosophy sets up any system that parts company with the common sense of mankind, or runs counter to any universal, radical tendency of human nature, however ingenious the line of thought, however skilfully its facts may be arranged, it is proceeding in a wrong direction. The universal bent of the rational nature is towards truth; to question this assertion would be to discredit too profoundly the general intelligence from which all our intelligences have been inherited. And the individual reason of any thinker, however acute and profound, when attempting to establish any conclusion in opposition to the unconscious, universal conclusion of mankind as a whole, is engaged in a hopeless task. A man may be moral without being religious—he will be a rare exception; but such an exception may exist. But it is utterly impossible that any valid system of Ethics can be constructed by human ingenuity, without recognizing the existence of God as the Author of the Universe, and of the moral order. A man may act upon the dictates of his conscience, and obey the laws of duty, without challenging it for its credentials; he may recognize the binding force of the *ought* without asking whence it is derived. He may be sufficiently enlightened, and so little under the influence of his passions, that the superiority of a life led according to his rational nature will commend itself to him with sufficient weight to incline him to follow it. Epictetus, we are told, was such a man. There are, no doubt, many such among the men of to-day who have rejected Christianity, but who have retained all the moral code which it has developed; who, to speak their own language, live in an environment which it has created and who have engrained in their character much of its influence, derived from the registered experience of their ancestors. Others are so little given to reflection or to questioning their motives, that the approbation which

society gives to the moral standard suffices to ensure their obedience. But when we remember how universally the religious motive has always prevailed, and how it may be implicitly involved in the recognition of domestic or social authority, the existence of many persons in this latter class will appear, to say the least, very improbable.

When, however, morality is made the subject of systematic inquiry, or when an individual who feels the bonds of duty irksome asks himself why he must submit to duty, and for its sake sacrifice his other inclinations, then the value of moral obligation must be investigated, and, under penalty of seeing it vanish altogether, its supreme authority must be vindicated; the absolute character of the line which divides good from evil must be clearly defined, and the transcendent value of the moral good over every gratification which conflicts with it must be established. Here we pass from the facts of morality to the science of Ethics. The late Professor Huxley was supposed to have displayed his characteristic good sense and humor when he said, "The assertion that morality is in any way dependent on philosophical problems, produces the same effect on my mind as if one should say that a man's vision depends on his theory of sight, or that he has no business to be sure that ginger is hot in his mouth, unles she has formed definite views as to the nature of ginger." We may search in vain the whole realm of literature for a parallel instance of so shallow a remark from so intelligent a man. It confounds *is* with *ought;* it places on the same plane the report of the senses and the verdict of conscience, and assumes an identity of nature between the moral and the physical world. And even the most thorough-going evolutionists, whilst they hold that the moral has evolved from the sensible, admit, nevertheless, a radical distinction between the antecedent and the product. The senses report facts of the world of phenomena—we do not dispute their report, however disagreeable it may be to us, for no such

challenge will rid us of it. If a man sees a dangerous animal approaching him, both his instinct and his reason will prevent him from endeavoring to dispose of the inconvenient fact by examining whether or not the testimony of the senses has any validity. The moral judgment, too, often announces to us tidings very disagreeable. The way to some gratification is barred not by a material object, but by the bar of duty; we are powerfully impelled to dispute the authority of conscience and the inviolability of duty. Then, unless we have some accepted principles as to the testimony of conscience and the sacredness of duty, both will be treated as non-existent. Common sense does not allow a man, unless he be a philosopher, to ask, "Why must I believe my senses?" But it does allow, nay, it urges him to ask the other question, "Why ought I to obey my conscience?" and this question and its answer forms "a philosophical problem" upon the solution of which, in the great majority of cases, will depend whether the agent will, under the circumstances, observe or violate the laws of morality. When the authority of the moral judgment is challenged, we must be satisfied that we are bound to obey it. The man who is solicited to one line of conduct by the sensual part of his nature and ordered to take another by his moral guide, will ask himself why he must obey the latter and contradict the former, why he must prefer the moral good to the other, which appeals powerfully to his animal appetites. The authority of duty conflicts continually with propensities just as radical to our nature as reason itself, and why we should live according to the higher faculty and why that part is the nobler, are questions which continually present themselves, either implicitly or explicitly, to our consciousness. Whoever puts to himself these questions and arrives at a practical solution has formed for himself a system of Ethics.

Mankind, we have seen, accepted and acted upon the solution that right is to be done and evil avoided because

such conduct is pleasing to the divinity. When speculation busies itself with the ever-recurring problem of man's origin and destiny, the most important, because the practical, part of the problem is what concerns the moral life. Every philosophy has aimed at a system of Ethics as its outcome and crown. Those of to-day, which either eliminate God altogether, or so modify the idea of God that religion becomes as a fifth wheel to the wagon, maintain that morality, complete and efficient, can exist without the recognition of God, or any religious reference. The failure of their efforts proves what the history of mankind proves, that religion and morality are intrinsically connected. Whilst, as we have already said, a certain measure of morality may exist without religion, there can be no adequate motive established for the observance of the moral law, no explanation of the sacredness of duty and the supreme value of moral good, without falling back on the truth of God's existence,—God, meaning an intelligent Supreme Creator, who has created man for an end, which purpose is manifested to man by an inspection of his own nature, and the universe with which he is thrown in contact.

In their inability to solve consistently with their philosophic tenets, the true problem of ethics, the value of the *ought*, and the supreme value of the moral good, positivist writers like Leslie Stephens, and the entire evolutionary school, endeavor to escape from the difficulty, by destroying the essential character of Ethics. In their hands it becomes a mere descriptive science, like botany, zoology or astronomy. They give us elaborate accounts of the genesis of the moral faculty, biological treatises on the functions of the human brain, on the interdependence of psychical phenomena, the origin of society and the growth of "social tissue." Ethics, however, is not a descriptive but a practical, regulative science. It does not investigate the laws of conduct as the physicist treats of the laws of

gravitation.[1] Though the character of the philosophic creed which he holds fast made it impossible for Mr. Spencer to realize his idea of Ethics, he indicates in the preface to his *Data of Ethics* that he is conscious of what Ethics ought to be.—"The establishment of the rules of right conduct on a scientific basis is," he says, "a pressing need." Now this is exactly the scope of Ethics. But the establishment of the rules of right conduct cannot evidently mean merely the demonstration of the laws which regulate the sequences of moral actions, or the nature of the faculties from which they flow. A scientific knowledge of these phenomena undoubtedly enters into the scope of Ethics, but is not the essential part of that science. The establishment of moral rules means the vindication of their binding power, the demonstration of the validity of moral obligation, the inviolability of duty, the authority of conscience, the transcendent character of the moral good. The achievement of these results is reached only by recognizing God as the Author of the moral law, as the subsequent exposition of representative ethical theories shall show.

[1] See St. Thomas: in Ethic. I., Lect. I.; Wundt: Ethics, Vol. I., Introduction.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROXIMATE BASIS AND RULE OF MORALITY.

THE existence of the moral judgment is a fact of human nature; this fact implies the perception by the mind of two different and opposite classes, into which these actions which constitute conduct, and which in the aggregate make up the life of man as a rational being, are divided, good and bad, or right and wrong. There is, besides this discrimination of actions, an assertion by the mind, of some kind of necessity binding the agent to embrace the right and shun the wrong. Conduct is good or bad, so far forth as it is adjusted to this judgment, and complies with the exigencies of this tie which the moral sense declares to bind the agent. The other term of this tie is that object which, because conformable to the nature, is capable, when attained, of satisfying all the tendencies; it is therefore the end of the activities. As conduct is action, and all action is a movement towards an end, this classification of conduct into good and bad is nothing but the determination of its quality with reference to that end: if it is calculated to reach this end, it is good, as we call a gun good that carries far and straight, thus attaining the end for which it is employed. Right and wrong are terms which involve a reference to this end; if an action is such as to reach the end of conduct, or the good, it is right, as a road is right which leads to the desired terminus. The first problem, then, upon which everything else hangs, is the determination of the moral end, the moral good. We cannot specify a straight line without indicating the point to which it tends; we cannot call

conduct right or wrong, until we have settled towards what goal conduct is to lead: *Constituto fine constituta sunt omnia.* Nor can we determine what is the moral good until we know what is the good in general. To recur to the above illustration, the gun is good because it reaches the desired end, from which it derives its goodness; but this end must either derive from some further end, or be good in itself. The goodness of the gun consists merely in utility. We must therefore come to an end which is a good in itself.

A very simple psychological and physiological analysis reveals to us many energies of human nature, all directed severally towards some particular object which is the direct end of such an energy or faculty. The impulse towards activity in the faculty consists in a desire, need, or craving for this proper object; and the attainment of that object imparts to it a completion of the nature, a realization of the possibilities which are in it. Such an object, considered with reference to that faculty, is its proper good. And as long as we restrict our consideration to that faculty alone, this good is not a useful good merely, but a good in itself. The end of the visual faculty is the apprehension of the visible object. This is its proper good, which, by attainment, completes the nature of the apprehensive energy which constitutes the faculty of sight. But the faculty of sight is not an independent entity in the being which possesses it; like all the other springs of activity, it is, we find, co-ordinated towards a general good of the whole being. The various energies or faculties have one common source, which embraces all, and is directed towards a good proper to itself. As the faculties are thus subordinated to the primary, radical, unifying principle of activity, called the nature of the individual, so their appropriate goods are contributory to the proper object, end or good of the entire nature. In any of the lower animals, for example,

the visual faculty and, like it, all the other energies, are subordinate to the general end of the entire nature which is the conservation and development of the life of the individual itself, and of the species to which it belongs.

The good of the nature then will be the aggregate to which contribute the goods of the various faculties. But that such a subordination towards an end may exist there must prevail some unifying principle to control all towards the common end. In the life of the rational being this controlling principle is evidently the reason and will, or the will inasmuch as directed by the intelligence. To indicate this controlling principle, which represents the confluence of the two highest faculties so intimately related, we shall employ the term rational will. This controlling faculty, then, has for its object the reduction of the other activities directed towards the one common end of the nature. And this reduction itself being the proper object of the rational will is the moral good. This rationalization of all the other activities as far as they fall under the control of the will, is the moral good, the end of conduct. Reserving for later consideration the question of what is the ultimate end or good towards which the entire nature tends, we shall confine ourselves, first, to the various elements and implications of the moral good.

Conduct, then, is good when it is rational, or when the rational will subordinates the action of the other faculties to the dictates of reason. If any good of a particular faculty or energy is of such a nature as to be incapable of this subordination, then, though it remains a good for the faculty considered separately in itself, yet not being capable of reduction under the good of the supreme faculty, it is not a good of the entire nature; it lacks the rational subordination. If, for example, a hungry man sees food, that object is a good of the sensible energies; but if the food happens to be the dinner of a hungrier child, then,

though still a good of the appetite, reason pronounces against the act of taking it; and if our hungry man nevertheless appropriates it, such an act is a violation of the dictates of reason.

The act fails to realize the moral end, and is pronounced wrong by the rational faculty. The food remains a good for the sensible faculty, but it is not so for the moral. It is a universal experience that such a conflict among the various faculties is a steady phenomenon of the moral life. Reason sometimes succeeds in asserting its authority, but often the will is led away by the attraction of the sensible good; and this strife of the various subordinate faculties to assert themselves against the rational judgment is the root of moral evil. Herbert Spencer refers this conflict of interests to the want of adjustments between the "militant and industrial tendencies," as if it depended ontologically upon man's relation to his fellows. But its origin lies deeper in human nature; all the elements necessary for its manifestation are in the individual himself: a Robinson Crusoe, cut off forever from all human fellowship, would yet comprise within his being the elements and conditions necessary for the phenomenon of moral evil.

The final judgment declaring some actions to be consistent with reason, others to be lacking in this characteristic, involves the existence of some rule or standard by which reason tests the nature of action and pronounces upon the presence or absence of this character. Now the speculative intellect is the same faculty which is concerned in the pronouncing of the moral judgment; and the nature of its action in the one sphere will throw sufficient light upon its procedure in the other. Corresponding to the primordial impulse of the speculative reason towards the true, and a repugnance to the false, there is in the practical sphere of conduct, the impulse of the rational faculty to accept as consistent with its own nature, the

conduct which is judged rational.[1] The subjective formal element in the speculative sphere finds a complementary objective element in the objects which become the matter of cognition; and the mind affirms its speculative judgments by a reference to the nature of these objects. In like manner the nature of things with which moral action is concerned is the objective criterion, by means of which the intellect, in practical affairs, estimates whether or not the character of actions conform to its own nature. The intellect, as the guide of the will in the sphere of conduct, reads the nature of action in the various natures of all beings, in human nature objectively considered in all its aspects, corporeal and mental, in what pertains to the conservation and development of life, individual and specific, in the innumerable relations existing between man, his fellows, and all the objects with which life brings him in contact. As it perceives in the speculative sphere that certain conclusions are congenital to its natural bias, and therefore calls such conclusions true, it perceives certain relations between actions and their object, which it judges to be harmonious with its own nature; and others it concludes to be wanting in that harmony. The former acts it pronounces to be right and the others to be wrong, inasmuch as the presence or absence of the quality renders them conformable or repugnant to itself. The moral standard, then, is reason itself perceiving the order manifested in the nature of things, objectively expressed in things, subjectively apprehended in the intellect.

In coming to its moral conclusions about the goodness of an action, the rational faculty makes use of many subordinate standards, customs, manners, conventions, the authority of society or of an individual director, the utility or the injury to ourselves, or to others, involved in the consequences. But all these merely certify to some

[1] St. Thomas Aq.: Quæst. Disp. De Virtutibus in Communi, q. 1, art. 8. Cf. Summa, 1a, q. T. 9, a. 12.

feature in the action, and the final estimate lies in the harmony or the discordance of the action with reason itself. The utilitarian test is undoubtedly one of the most frequent application; but utility alone is not the authoritative criterion. Though a course of conduct should prove eminently useful, yet if, under all the given circumstances, that conduct should be found inconsistent with the universal order, then it is condemned by reason as morally wrong. One of the strongest objections urged against utilitarianism is that if its principle were admitted, many actions universally condemned by the moral sense of mankind would be irreproachably virtuous.[1] Right and wrong, then, of conduct are the affirmation or negation pronounced by the intellect of a correspondence of the action with the order existing in the universe and perceived by reason. The fundamental principle upon which all such practical judgments are based consists in the native, inherent bent of reason to assert its position as the guide of all the other faculties through the intervention of the will. This natural basis of all moral judgments, translated into words is expressed in the affirmation: *Right is to be pursued; wrong to be avoided*, or some equivalent proposition. This basic principle of all moral judgments is, therefore, intuitive, and is implied in every particular judgment. By the application of this fundamental principle to any particular act a judgment is reached. Reason considers the nature of the act in question, in its various relations, and if it perceives that, to preserve the adjustment of conduct to the universal order, such an action is necessary, it pronounces the moral judgment,—this act is to be performed. If, on the contrary, it perceives that an action is out of harmony with that order, it dictates that the act is wrong: and in some cases the verdict of reason will be that, though the action is compatible with the order of things, yet to omit it

[1] See Part IV., Chap. II.

would not be incompatible with the order; the act then is licit.

It may be objected that moral judgments are usually formed with a rapidity which precludes any such investigation of the fitness of things as has been postulated. But it must be remembered that in a great many of our moral judgments we take our stand upon some general principle which we seize with great facility, just as we perceive the primary truths of number and quantity. In much of our conduct, too, it is by the compendious way of authority that we reach our practical conclusions, perceived but confusedly by us as included in the general principle. When, for example, the appropriation of another's property suggests itself to a man, he does not enter into an investigation of the relations involved in the act, but takes his stand on a general principle, that it is wrong to take what belongs to another. This general principle, in turn, he may accept on the authority of one to whom he looks for moral guidance, or on the strength of the accepted social standard. If this is the case, then behind that principle, he falls back upon another judgment which is implicit, affirming that it is consistent with reason that he should conform to such authority. Many actions, too, are so obviously contrary to reason and the order of nature that their repugnance is perceived without any ratiocinative process, as, for example, murder and adultery.

Writers of the Intuitionalist school hold that right and wrong are perceived by an intuition of the mind, as if by a kind of reasonable instinct, without any comparison whatever, instituted by reason, in the same way as the primary principle is held. But such a position, if constantly adhered to, involves the absurd conclusion that in every case the moral judgment will unerringly reach a correct determination of the character of any act.[1] If such were the case,

[1] See Martineau: Types of Ethical Theories, Vol. II. Lecky: History of

there would be no need for reasoning as to the lawfulness of any action, however complicated the considerations involved. But it is undeniable that frequently a judgment on the rectitude of a particular action can be reached only by a long and complicated process of reasoning, involving many secondary principles, and an examination of facts and circumstances so numerous that a practical judgment is reached with difficulty, and cannot be pronounced with certainty. Besides, if reason thus estimates intuitively the right and wrong in conduct, how are we to account for divergent moral judgments upon the same action?

The moral judgment is pronounced with an authoritativeness which is absent in speculative judgments. The moral *ought* not alone indicates a true conclusion, but also expresses a necessity of some kind binding the will, not indeed a necessity which coerces, for, though reason affirms the rightness of a certain conduct, and testifies to some existent necessity for embracing it, yet the will remains free, and may prefer some other to the moral good. The hungry man may, despite the moral light which manifests a judgment against the action, take the dinner of the hungrier child. The necessity implied in the *ought*, the necessity of duty, is not one of coaction. What, then, is this necessity which constitutes moral obligation? We have already seen that the good of a faculty is the end toward which it naturally tends; the moral good, or the rationalization of conduct, consisting in a harmonious adjustment of conduct to the universal order is the good of the rational will, *to which by its nature it tends*. As every other faculty pursues its good by a necessity implanted in it, so, too, reason, by a similar necessity, tends to the realization of the moral order as its proper good, just as in the other sphere of its activity it tends to truth. And

European Morals, Vol. I. Chap. I. W. H. Ward: *Dub. Review*, Jan., 1880. Ethics and its Bearings on Theism.

the expression of this tendency is the moral judgment, affirming what conduct, in any given circumstance, is required to preserve the conformity. The act is necessary hypothetically; it is necessary, if the end of the rational will is to be realized. Thus moral obligation is a necessity of means depending on the necessity of the end to be reached. If the means are neglected, then the moral nature is thrown outside the line in which lies its proper good and perfection. The will is free to pursue this good, or to reject it for some other; but the consequence of rejection is a deflection from the end of the moral nature. The sense of obligation is a beam of light which may be broken through but which stands, nevertheless, to indicate the good of the higher faculty, which, from the nature of man, requires all the other faculties to be subordinate to it. In the violation of moral obligation the order of finality is disregarded, and the rational nature perverted from its proper good and perfection. This necessity is such that, though it may be ignored in conduct, it cannot be annihilated; the will may pursue some particular good, when reason pronounces such conduct to be wanting in the note of harmony with the universal order of the universe. The rational mind protests against such action as a violation of the tie binding the being to pursue that good, which, because it is the end and perfection of the regulative and directive faculty, is the end which requires the subordination of all the other goods.

In the rational nature, then, we find a satisfactory account of the moral phenomena. Duty and obligation arise from the nature of the mind invincibly inclined to look for its perfection in the establishment of a rational order among all the various faculties. The realization of this order, in other words, the rationalization of conduct, is the proper object, the good of that faculty which is highest in human nature; and only in the pursuit of this good will man live up to what is essentially human in

his nature. The intellect itself, the faculty which has the true for its object, apprehending the relations of act and end, with all the circumstances, which, in countless permutations, enter into conduct, is the exponent of the standard dividing right and wrong. Whilst the primary fundamental principle of the moral law is, by the very nature of the mind, intuitively impressed, the further knowledge of the moral code depends on the development of reason, on the insight acquired into the various objects, relations, circumstances with which conduct is concerned. Hence though the moral law is connatural to the human mind, yet men, owing to the difference in the stages of intellectual development, and differences of subsidiary standards which are accepted by them as authoritative, have arrived at moral estimates which are in conflict with each other. There is in the mind itself a sanction for the moral law, in the pain which comes of unsatisfied need, when the moralization of conduct, the proper good of the rational will, is not attained. This inward sanction may be extensively enforced by external sanctions of society.

A great deal of fine writing has been wasted in lofty denunciation needlessly hurled at Christian Ethics, on the ground that it teaches the absolute dependence of the distinction between right and wrong, on the positive pleasure of a divine Legislator, who arbitrarily enacts that certain actions condemned by him shall be held as wrong, whilst others are approved by an equally arbitrary exercise of authority. Such is the view Herbert Spencer takes of the Christian theory of morality.[1] "Religious creeds established and dissenting all embody the belief that right and wrong are right and wrong simply in virtue of divine enactment, that moral truths have no other origin than the will of God." This was the theory of Grotius[2] and of

[1] See Data of Ethics, § 45.

[2] De Jure Belli et Pacis, Chap. I., Sec. 10.

Paley.[1] It is the Mussulman view of Ethics, which alone can justify the special concessions alleged to have been made to the Prophet. It has been advocated by some isolated Catholic theologians; but Catholic theology and philosophy, as a whole, have rejected it. The authoritative doctrine of the Church is that the moral law, fixed in the nature of things, is incapable of internal change, and is universal in its application for every one capable of using his reason. It has been called into being by the fact that the nature of man and that of the universe are constituted as they exist; and whilst the essence of these is what it is, the distinction between good and evil remains eternally the same;—"boni verique ratio mutari ad hominis arbitrium non potest, sed manet semper eadem, neque minus est quam ipsa rerum incommutabilis natura."[2]

The insufficiency of the "arbitrary" theory is easily shown, and when this is done, from the ranks of the positivist coryphæi goes up the exultant cry of "A Daniel, yea a Daniel!" Yet the ignorance of the Christian view which such a line of argument betrays brings a smile to the lips of the merest tyro, whose first lesson in Ethics was to master the principle that right is right and wrong is wrong, antecedent to all sanction, human or divine; that from the very nature of man and of the universe, just as it is impossible that there should be a square circle, or that the whole should be less than the part, so it is impossible that any exercise of Divine Omnipotence should be capable of altering the line of division which marks the boundaries between good and evil. Until the guides of the modern mind adopt the rule, recommended both by Logic and Ethics, of mastering the teachings of a system before proceeding to demolish it to their own satisfaction, they will

[1] Moral Philosophy, Book II., Ch. III., IV. See Lecky: European Morals, pp. 17 ff.

[2] Leo XIII.: Encycl. *Immortale Dei.*

always make the mistake of attacking creations of their own imagination, under the impression that they are rejecting Christian doctrine. Meanwhile our refuge must be in the patient shrug, for to suffer misrepresentation is the badge of all our tribe.

If we accept the postulate that we are to live according to what is highest in our nature, or, in other words, to lead lives worthy of rational beings, it is not necessary to look outside our own nature, nor to cast our eyes beyond the horizon of an earthly existence for the principles required in the constitution of the moral life. If we were constructing a system of Ethics for a race of hypothetical beings in whom the control of reason would actually, as it ought to do, dominate all the other activities, then morality might not look beyond human nature for the value of the moral good, the validity of the moral standard, the authority of obligation, and a sanction for conduct. Man would be his own standard. In the future Utopia of evolution, the conflicting tendencies which at present prove so recalcitrant, will be perfectly harmonized under the sway of reason, virtue will be its own reward, and vice,—well, there will be no vice. Unfortunately, however, this ideal condition does not correspond to anything that the world has ever seen: the record of the race and the diagnosis of human nature, as we know it, offer no grounds for believing, even on the prophetic assurance of evolutionary moralists, that human nature is undergoing an essential modification. We must look at the moral life, as it is, and always has been. Now the moral judgment implies that there are two paths of conduct, one right and the other wrong; a code of morals implies that, while there is one way which we ought to take, there is another which we are inclined to follow. This irrational path a great number of people constantly, and a still greater number occasionally, select.

A great many other goods incompatible with the moral good are soliciting, and frequently with alarming success,

the preference of every individual. While the impulse towards the moral good is rational, the tendencies of the sensible appetites are much more imperious; and the satisfaction to be derived from duty performed often fails to outweigh the goods which imagination can heap up on the other scale.

The assumption that we ought to live according to our higher nature may be challenged by the unwilling individual or by philosophic speculation. Your classification of goods and happiness which places the moral good in the highest rank, requires confirmation by some standard which I cannot gainsay, or else remains a conclusion of personal idiosyncrasy. If there is no end beyond life, a reference to which classifies goods into higher and lower, why may I not embrace that which makes the strongest appeal to me? If duty entails, as it frequently does, sacrifices which deprive me of much good and subsequent happiness of a certain kind, why should I forego these goods, if I prefer them? The satisfaction attendant upon duty performed is smothered in my consciousness by the accompanying experience of self-denial. Your estimate of value is not mine, and though you say yours is the true one, yet in the absence of any authoritative standard to determine the relative value, I may cling to my own. Unless behind the ethical judgment there lies some supreme principle on which it rests, it is devoid of authority.

Another consideration which can be but briefly alluded to, enforces the necessity of looking outside life for the end of life. As rational beings we demand an adequate motive for the exercise of our faculties. Our sense of human dignity requires an end and purpose, to make our lives worth living. If we are to repress the lower tendencies of our nature, in order to regulate our conduct according to the dictates of reason, we must recognize that there is some supreme, adequate good, which gives a surpassing value to conduct so characterized. Duty is usu-

ally the obverse of self-sacrifice,—whence does duty derive its intrinsic goodness, which makes it deserving of our sacrifice for it? The moral good is, in the judgment of every reasonable man, superior to the good of the senses, to the good of the affections and that of the intellect. For it, duty often calls upon us to forego all the others. But if I cannot find in duty some authority to demand this supreme homage, why should I, for it, give up the other goods of nature? If I am called upon to subordinate myself to the realization of the moral good, to make the development of my life adapt itself to certain lines consistent with duty, whether such a course is pleasing to my inclinations or not, there must be some supreme end of sufficient value to make this conformity imperative. Unless the conformity or non-conformity of my conduct to the line of duty has some permanent, abiding consequences, there is no sufficient reason why I should give myself much trouble about the matter.

If I am but a particular aggregate of physical cohesions, which, in a very short time, shall be as if they had never been, then, when that dissolution shall have taken place, the character of my conduct will be of no more importance than the angle of incidence made by a particular drop of yesterday's rain-storm. Unless I can find that the record of my life as a whole will be a matter of enduring importance, I have no adequate motive to walk cabined, cribbed, confined, in the narrow bounds of duty, when my nature calls for a fuller and freer expansion. It may be that I should derive more advantage or happiness by following the moral good than from an opposite course. But this can only be determined by myself, as it depends entirely on subjective experience. The practical selection made by a great number of persons proves clearly that, in their estimate, the happiness to be procured by the enjoyment of the senses, outweighs that derived from a strict adherence to the moral law. The primrose path

of dalliance is patronized much more extensively than the thorny road of duty. Besides, there is no voice of authority commanding me, against my own wishes, to take the latter. If the moral interest expires with the death of the individual, it has no transcendent character to make it sacred and inviolable. If man is his own end, it is of but little consequence whether he plays the rôle of Brutus or Iago, as he frets out his little hour on the stage of cosmic phenomena. And a ridiculous pigmy he is, and a paltry farce his performance, compared with the magnificence of the staging, with suns for footlights, and "stars for tapers tall," till he vanishes into nothingness, at the drop of the curtain. It is true that Positivist philosophers and poets assure him that he will enjoy, in the remembrance of the audience, an immortality of one day more; and if his performance was good he will receive a laudatory notice in the morning newspapers issued by posterity. But these delightful goods can be enjoyed by him only by anticipation, for the hypothesis is that poor Persona, with his consciousness and identity, disappeared last night out of existence, as completely as the atmospheric vibrations which made the hissing and applause. His share of George Eliot's "purest heaven—the choir invisible, whose music makes the gladness of the world," is the share which the dead man has in the enjoyment of the audience listening to his voice reproduced by a phonograph. Besides, the obscurity of his station and the narrowness of the sphere in which his activities were displayed, may have never allowed him a chance of recording anything in the phonograph for the enjoyment of posterity. And his inclination, or the force of circumstances, may have hindered him from transmitting to any descendants the experiences registered in his organism by the acts which made up his life.

There is, however, one end proposed for conduct which is supposed to be a peremptory argument against any

scepticism as to the supreme importance and dignity of life when estimated on the positivist basis. The magic word humanity dispels all doubt. The individual is of no importance except as an atom in the great whole. The supreme end is the welfare of the race. What higher motive could be conceived for the inspiration of conduct than the progress of the entire human family? In this goal of duty lies a spell which casts a grandeur over human destiny. The changes are rung upon humanity and society, the destiny of man, the solidarity of the race; and, if we are not susceptible of being fired by these words to the highest heat of sacrifice and charity, even though there be nought but eternal sleep beyond the tomb, then has judgment fled to brutish beasts. But when Positivism goes into ecstasies, we shall find it advisable to scrutinize somewhat closely the terms which it uses, and find out what these precisely stand for. In all this dogmatism about society and humanity as the chief end of life, there is the implication that in the perfection of the race there is something essentially distinct from the perfection of the individual. But the end of humanity is a fallacy evolved out of the mistake of taking an abstract idea for a really existing thing. Humanity is but a handy abbreviation; a name given to indicate the aggregate of human beings. Humanity means John, James, Henry and all their brothers and sisters. The supreme good of humanity is the aggregate of all the goods of each individual. If a regiment of soldiers is to eat dinner, it will eat it when each individual soldier eats his own; and it would be nonsense to speak of the dinner of the regiment as something essentially distinct from those of the soldiers. The good of humanity can have no higher intrinsic character than is to be found in the good of the individual. Unless each person is destined to an end which confers on his moral life a supreme value, then no other person's life possesses that value. As far as this

value is concerned the individual is represented by a zero; and the end or good of humanity, by a very imposing aggregate of similar ciphers, the grand total of which will be zero. If the individual end and good is not sufficient to impart a supreme significance to life, and to consecrate with the stamp of authoritativeness the claims of duty and the obligation of self-sacrifice, it is idle to assert that life will derive this supreme value, which it lacks, by devoting itself to other lives as worthless as itself.

The human mind has, at all times, obeyed a natural tendency to look beyond the gates of death for the meaning of this present existence. Only from beyond can we derive an adequate motive to call forth the energy, the self-sacrifice, the perseverance required to subordinate the lower appetites to the moral good. It is only the conviction that a future life awaits us, which gives value to the present. "He who believes," says Tylor, "that this thread of life will be severed once and forever by the fatal shears, well knows that he wants a purpose and a joy in life, which belongs to him who looks for a life to come.—The belief in immortality extends its powerful influence through life, and culminates, at the last hour, when setting aside the very evidence of their senses, the mourners smile through their tears and say it is not death but life."

[1] Primitive Culture, II. 107.

CHAPTER III.

THE ULTIMATE END AND RULE.

FROM whatever point of view we examine the problem of human life, either in its physical, psychological or moral aspect, if we are to reach a solid ground on which to rear a theory of existence, of knowledge, or of morals, we are logically driven to the recognition of God. Without a supreme cause of all being the existence of the universe is an absurdity. Without the existence of a supreme, absolute, substantial truth, every attempt at building a theory of knowledge results in a mesh of scepticism out of which reason cannot escape, and in which, without contradicting itself, it cannot rest. Without the recognition of a supreme, intelligent Ruler at the back of the moral law, morality is without a meaning and life without value to make it worth living. The alternative is between a recognition of God's existence, on the one side, and, on the other, scepticism in the intellectual life and pessimism in the moral. But neither scepticism nor pessimism are congenial to human nature, nor, if taken out of the nebulous realm of cobweb-spinning philosophy, to be made practical guides of life, are they consistent with the survival of the race. In every period of history, at every stage of human development, the mind of man has been impelled to look outside the visible creation for a solution of his own existence. An innate necessity of our reason, which every savage obeys, and which no philosopher, under penalty of finding himself and his system in complete antagonism with common sense, can resist, drives us to assume the principle of causality. Intelligent reflection along this line,

in which reason, by its nature, moves, leads us to the existence of a first Cause, itself uncaused. This Power, self-existent, independent, must, therefore, be subject to no limitations; it must be infinite under every aspect. The Source of all actuality, it must possess, transcending all measure, every positive energy which any of the beings that derive from it enjoy. And, as there exist beings of intelligence and will, in this Infinite Power, which because it is infinite in its nature is indeed inscrutable, there must exist, in a perfect manner to which the nature of our powers bears but a faint analogy, intelligence and will. The harmony, co-ordination, system, which the advance of positive science reveals to us more and more every day, confirms the conclusion that the Inscrutable Power, which imparts activity to all phenomena, is no blind, mechanical force working at random and reaching its results at haphazard. Purpose we read everywhere, alike in the formation of a microscopic crystal, and in the interaction of revolving worlds, and in an order, of which science reveals to us but disconnected glimpses. Though we cannot pursue the lines which constitute it, we see enough to know that the intelligence which presides over all this order is directing everything to one universal end. In every creature God has implanted the motive principle to carry it to that object which is the proper end of the being, in subordination to the universal end. As we have already seen, the various faculties in man, focussed to one end by the highest faculty, have for their object the moral good; which, as we have seen, is the adjustment of his conduct to that universal order. This, then, is the good which his place in the universal order imposes on him as his immediate end.

The further question arises, to what does this adjustment lead? Can we discover by the use of our reason any further end to which this is but the means? We find the course of life we are to pursue, by the exercise of our

intelligence on our own nature and those of the things with which life brings us in contact. Can we, proceeding on the same line, reach a deeper knowledge of the divine plan, and find what is the further end to which this immediate end is to lead us? The investigation of a piece of mechanism reveals the purpose of the author:—in the nature of our faculties we again reach the answer which we seek. The intellect is capable of truth in every form; how wide soever the sweep of the circle along which it comes in contact with knowledge, it has a capacity for more. The enlargement of our intellectual horizon only brings us in contact with a wider universe of truth which lies outside. Truth, not some particular truths, but any truth, all truth is alone the adequate object of the intellect. Similarly the will which is capable of as wide a sweep as its guide, the intellect, has for its object not this or that good, but good without specification, unlimited good. Now, since we recognize a supreme Intelligence as the Author of all our faculties, we must admit that the impulse towards an object has not been given in vain, and that consequently our nature is destined to a good sufficient to exhaust the capacity of our will, to fill the measure of our intelligence. Such an object must, therefore, be unlimited in its nature. It must be goodness undetermined by any limitations of space or time, or by any deficiency in the measure of its goodness. These conditions at once disqualify every finite object from posing as the supreme good of man. Every finite good, sensation, pleasure, love, acquired knowledge, is necessarily limited.

The unsatisfactory character of all such pursuits has been the experience of man at all times. One-half of the world's literature consists in a ringing of the changes on the wise man's dictum: Vanity of vanities; and all is vanity. It were idle to spend time proving the evident. If the capacities of human nature are to be satisfied,—and that they have been given to us by an all-

wise Author of existence, who can produce nothing without a purpose, assures us that they are,—it must be by the attainment of some object in which exists unlimited goodness, in other words, God Himself, the only object capable of responding adequately to the capacities of intelligence and will. God, then, is the ultimate end for which man with his intellectual nature has been brought into existence. In that nature, with its unconquerable impulse to seek its own happiness, he has the initial motion which is to carry him to the constituted end. In the light of this truth, life has a supreme value, and the moral mind problem is invested with a meaning. All its elements find themselves clothed with a character which they had not before. The moral good which, as long as it was established in human reason alone, could not vindicate its claims to paramount importance, is now the indispensable means for the attainment of the supreme good, and, by the closeness of this relationship, participates to some extent in the value of the supreme good, God Himself. The moral judgment, instead of being an unidentified voice, crying in the wilderness, without any sufficient warrant to enforce obedience, is the authorized representative of Almighty Power and Supreme Authority.

The distinction between right and wrong is founded in the order of the universe, which is a reflection of the Divine Nature, as conceived by the Divine Intelligence. Right and wrong, therefore, are constituted by no paltry consideration of utility, nor by any reference to a sanction, either temporal or eternal. The distinction between them, founded in the Divine Nature itself, is eternal and unchangeable. Right is right and wrong is wrong, not because it pleased God arbitrarily so to decree, as the Koran teaches, and as some writers say Catholic philosophy teaches, but because God is what He is, and cannot vary in His nature. Reason and the universal order, in which it reads the course of conduct consistent with the attain-

ment of the moral good, are the subjective and objective criteria, or rather two sides of the same criterion by which we may distinguish the right from the wrong. In the impulses towards asserting its authority to guide the other faculties, reason lays down the first principle of the moral code: *Do good and shun evil.* Whilst that principle is intuitively perceived by reason, in every being whose faculties are sufficiently developed to warrant his being considered rational at all, the application of it to the details of conduct requires an insight into life, bred of experience and reflection. Among men whose minds have reached even a moderate stage of development, there has always prevailed a very general consensus as to what is right and what is wrong; murder, adultery, robbery, drunkenness, have been everywhere prohibited. The purely moral codes of the Rig Veda, the Kings, the Zend Avesta, and the Book of the Dead agree very largely with the Decalogue.

The classification of virtues and vices is nearly the same among peoples who are on the same plane of enlightenment. Even the moral codes of most savage and barbarian races agree in the leading features. The utility of the tribe is the standard which receives the approbation of their reason, and is ratified by the application of the primary principle: Do good and shun evil. In the application of the fundamental principle to concrete conduct their insight may be so poor, and so perverted by traditional custom and authority, that their code approves of crimes that shock our moral sense. But the existence of such moral vices, and the contradiction among the codes of different peoples, do not tell against the universality and unchangeableness of the moral law. Many of its truths are ignored; sometimes erroneous conclusions are taken as true; yet the objective rule is the same for all, at all times. The postulates of Mathematics, known to a schoolboy, contain all the mass of remote

conclusions which have been deduced by mathematical experts, and an unlimited number beyond what human reason will ever unfold. If reason were perfectly acquainted with all the relationships of things and of the human will towards the world around it, it could formulate a complete moral code, down to the minutest conclusions, which, under the given circumstances, would be as unchangeable as the first principle itself. But with its limited force it must gain knowledge by slow degrees; and, in the moral world, this knowledge depends largely on experience. The increase of knowledge concerning the various elements of our nature, and the bearing of action, adds to our moral perception, often correcting what has hitherto been accepted as true. Thus, while the objective standard remains fixed and invariable, in the subjective interpretation of it, conscience, which is the guide of life, will pronounce a verdict varying with the variety of knowledge in different men. But, however erroneous it may be, the verdict of conscience claims obedience and cannot be disregarded without infringing the bond of moral obligation. The divergent and defective moral standards—and the divergence and defectiveness have been grossly exaggerated by observers, but badly equipped for psychological investigation, and by ethical writers with a theory to prove—show, not that the primary and fundamental moral truth is not universal, but that reason frequently errs in the conclusions which it deduces from undeniable principles.[1]

The nature of the tie which binds man to good conduct, inasmuch as such conduct is the necessary means to a necessary end, becomes manifest. This end is necessary because it has been imposed by the Author of nature in constituting humanity such as it is: it is necessary because man must tend to it in obedience to the primordial

[1] See Flint: Antitheistic Theories, pp. 521–531. Lecky, op. cit., Vol. I., pp. 92–94. Janet: La Morale, Liv. III., Ch. IV.

impulse urging him to seek his happiness, which can be found only in the proportionate good of his rational nature constituted for it by its Author. But, though such a necessary connection between conduct and the moral good exists, it does not coerce the free will, which, notwithstanding the warning of the rational faculty, may pursue in preference any other good. Though there is but one goodness which can satisfy and perfect human nature, yet in their necessary pursuit of the good, men may follow in preference any object in which there is any quality that renders it a good for any of their energies and appetites. All pursue good, but all do not agree in the object in which their good resides. Many are ready to take the pottage and forfeit their birthright. The sense and recognition of moral obligation which exists in consciousness is the assertion by the rational nature of its tendency to its constituted end, and as such is the expression of the Divine Legislator who established nature as it is. That Divine source whence the moral judgment derives its authority may be ignored; then the authoritativeness with which the conscience speaks is an enigma which defies all satisfactory solution. It is maintained by some writers that the moral voice involves the direct recognition of the Divine Personality behind it. Cardinal Newman has developed this view with a beauty peculiarly his own. But this can only be a subjective appreciation of personal experience; and all attempts to generalize it meet with the fact that many, who would stoutly resent a charge of immorality, declare that they do not believe in God, as a Personal Moral Ruler. Ward makes Newman's argument more plausible by interpreting it in the sense that the voice of conscience, when habitually listened to, leads to a recognition of God's existence. Whatever may be said of these views, one thing must be conceded; there is no satisfactory account of moral obligation without falling

[1] Grammar of Assent, Chap. V., § 1.

back upon the existence of God as author of the moral law. If a man acknowledges a sanctity in the moral law, and a sacredness in the judgments of conscience, without carrying his mind beyond it, he is a rare exception to the innate tendency of human nature, which universally has sought to link the law of duty with the authority of a Divine Power.

The moral law, then, is invested with inviolability and holiness, because it is the expression of the essential, necessary nature of the Divine Intelligence and Will. Every violation of it is not merely a contravention of our reasonable nature, but it is something opposed to the Divine; it is sin. The wickedness of sin is made up of a triple malice. It is a violation of the harmony of the universal order, a deviation from the end of conduct constituted by the Creator; and thus carries with it a contempt and disobedience of the Supreme Ruler, upon whom all things depend. It is a contempt of God from another point of view, for it involves a preference of some other object over that proper object of the rational will, the moral good, and, behind the moral, the Supreme and Infinite Good. Besides, it places man outside the order of finality,—and here we touch the essential sanction of the moral law,—so that he forfeits the attainment of the Infinite Good, which alone can confer upon his nature that complete perfection and happiness which it craves. Thus the failure to obtain this good condemns the being to the pain of hopeless aspiration.

Here appears the true relation between the deontological order (order of duty) and the eudemonological order (order of happiness), the confusion of which has involved modern Ethics, in self-contradictions, and led ethical writers, through long tortuous labyrinths, to a point where reason has affixed in very large letters: No thoroughfare. The Supreme Good is the end of the deontological order; duty must aim at the good; and

the good when attained becomes the source of happiness. The good is objective,—when it is attained, happiness is the subjective resultant condition. If we consider the good under the aspect which it assumes when the attainment is realized, then the good as cause, and the happiness as result, both united in the subject, are practically identical. But there is no mistaking this ontological relation of cause and effect. The close relationship of the two, in the physical order as well as in the moral, authorizes reason to conclude that the moral order is not violated if, while making the good the primary end of action, we aim at the happiness as a secondary end. Thus we steer a safe course between the utilitarian Scylla and the Kantian Charybdis. By making happiness the end of conduct, the utilitarian system reduces all moral values to inextricable confusion. Kant, on the other hand, condemning as wanting in morality every action into which self-interest enters, in however subordinate a manner, introduces a moral "too bright and good for human nature's daily food." It is lofty; it is too lofty, for it is impracticable. He himself doubted if man ever performed an action which would stand the test of his standard,—an admission which Letourneau has not inaptly called "the funeral oration of the categorical imperative." Kant's error consists in an exaggeration of the truth; though the motive of happiness, when duly subordinated, is not inconsistent with the moral order, yet because the good is the primary end to be sought, it follows that the more completely the will aims at the good, and excludes the motive of self-interest, the nobler and more perfect will be the character of the conduct.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT OF MORALITY.

As good conduct is the free regulation of action in accordance with the moral law it has both a subjective and an objective side. The criterion, too, is both subjective and objective, reason and the order of the Universe. To obviate misapprehension and to refute some groundless objections urged against the Catholic system of Ethics, some further elucidation of the relations between the objective and the subjective side is necessary.

According to the principles exposed in the preceding pages an act is morally good when it is approved by reason. If the action is considered in itself, the goodness appertaining, etc., it is merely objective. No action, however, exists by itself, but as the outcome of the activity of some agent; and, as morality regards essentially the moral agent, we have ultimately, for the determination of the good and bad in conduct, to consider, not the act itself, but the agent acting in such or such a manner. And it is plain that though an action, estimated merely in its abstract character, may be good, yet the conduct of him who performs it may be bad. The relief of a neighbor's necessity, for instance, if viewed in its objective character, is a good action; yet if some one relieves his neighbor's wants, in order to be seen of men, or, as frequently happens, for some still less worthy motive, he is acting immorally. Utilitarianism, which estimates moral values only from a reference to the beneficent or injurious results, cannot consistently find any ground for condemning much conduct of such a character. That the per-

formance of an action, which in itself is approved by reason, may be good conduct, the intention of the agent must likewise be approved by reason. This rightness of the motive, which, in modern Ethics, is usually designated by the term good will, is, therefore, an indispensable requisite in practical morality. In order, then, that conduct may be imputed as good, to the individual, two conditions are equally necessary: first, his reason, or conscience must approve the act as good in its own nature; secondly, the intention with which it is performed must equally have the approbation of conscience. In the language of Catholic theology and philosophy, these two elements are both designated by the term, end. The former is the natural or, so to speak, physical end of the action (*finis operis*); the other, the end to which the agent's will directs the action, and the attainment of which is the motive that urges him to perform it, is called the end of the agent (*finis operantis*). This latter end may be entirely outside the objective entity of the act, and belongs to the subjective side. The absence of goodness in either one or the other element vitiates conduct. An example will illustrate. Though instructing the ignorant in the moral law is one of the noblest of actions, yet, if I devote one day every week to that occupation, in order that my reputation for righteousness may aid me to cheat my neighbor, collectively or individually, the other six, then, though I have instructed the ignorant unto justice, I certainly have not thereby established any claim to shine as a star for all eternity. Conversely, if you swindle the public, in a Government contract, in order that you may be in a position to found a hospital, or endow a University, your charity—and charity covers a multitude of sins, in two senses of the expression—or your zeal for science will not absolve your conduct from the note of dishonesty.

This doctrine, which is nothing but the dictates of good sense, is expressed with his customary conciseness by

St. Thomas. (Prima Secundæ, Q. XIX., art. 7, ad. 3.) *Sive voluntas sit ejus quod secundum se est malum sub ratione boni, sive sit boni sub ratione mali, semper voluntas erit mala; sed ad hoc quod sit voluntas bona, requiritur quod sit bona sub ratione boni, id est quod velit bonum et propter bonum.* If the will perform a good action for a bad purpose, or a bad action for a good purpose, in each case conduct is vicious; that it may be good the will must aim at action the natural results of which are good, and it must do so for a purpose consistent with the moral law. This principle is so elementary that the scholastics formulated it into an axiom: *Bonum ex tota causa; malum ex quocumque defectu.* It is needless to dwell upon the untruthfulness contained in the time-honored calumny advanced against Catholic theology, that it taught the doctrine of the end justifying the means. Of those who repeat the accusation it would be safe to say that not one in a thousand has any knowledge at all of the principles taught in Catholic theology; and those who first circulated the charge must have been equally ignorant, or (one would avoid the alternative of stating that they were guilty of malicious misrepresentation) they failed to grasp the import of the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis.*

Another subjective element entering into the determination of the moral good, in its practical aspect, is conscience, or reason dictating the course of conduct to be followed by the will. While the universal order is the remote, objective rule of conduct, conscience determining from its apprehension of this rule is the immediate authoritative norm of action. Good will requires that action should be in conformity with this ultimate authority, for its judgment is the indication by reason of the kind of action required that conduct may be rational. Though sovereign controller of action, it is not independent, for its rectitude is regulated by the objective stand-

ard; and its authority derived from the Author of the moral law, whose will it interprets, and announces to the individual. Owing to the limitations of reason, and its consequent liability to err, it may, and frequently does, reach false conclusions as to the nature of conduct which the moral law demands; and the practical judgment based on such erroneous conclusions will be actually at variance with true morality. Nevertheless, in such circumstances, good will requires that the precepts or prohibitions of conscience be obeyed. Whatever may be the objective character of the actions, as viewed according to the true estimate of right and wrong, if the individual follows the dictates of his conscience, his conduct, as imputable to him, is right, and if he acts contrary to conscience it is wrong. The formal goodness of action is, then, not always identical with the material goodness. The Parsee, for example, who allows the parings of his nails to lie on the ground, violates no precept of morality; yet, because he believes that such conduct is wrong, or forbidden by the moral code which he accepts as true, he is guilty of wrong. A fanatical Mussulman, convinced that the killing of an unbeliever is an action good and meritorious in the sight of Allah, does not commit a crime imputable to him, if he takes the life of a Christian. The objective moral law may condemn an action, but if the law is not known to the subject, he is not guilty of immoral conduct in acting contrary to its decrees: *Nemo ligatur nisi mediante scientia.* On few points has misrepresentation of Catholic teaching been carried so far as on that concerning the inviolability of conscience, and the value of good will. Popular treatises on Ethics and religion abound in such assertions as that the Church substituted ecclesiastical authority for the authority of conscience; that she ignored the good will as an indispensable element of morality, and that the true claims of conscience and good will came to be recognized only through the influence of

the Protestant Reformation. A typical illustration of the erroneous notions propagated on this subject, is to be found in Professor Hyslop's *Elements of Ethics*. In a chapter on the development of Ethics, he states that during the prevalence of what he calls Ecclesiastical Christianity, the effect of the Church's claims was to determine virtue from without, instead of from within, to make virtue consist wholly in external conformity to law, whilst using the motive of religious reverence to enforce it, instead of relying upon the spontaneous choice of the individual will to determine merit; "Consequently salvation by works was made to supplant justification by faith, the inner principle of regeneration which was to Christianity what Kant's good will is to Idealistic Ethics." "Morality was made to spring from authority, and was independent of the intelligence and good will of the agent; except so far as respectful obedience determined his share in it." Abelard, we are informed, was the first to teach that virtue consists in the intention and not in the act. We are told, too, that Abelard "lays some stress upon a doctrine of conscience, as opposed to objective and authoritative morality. Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas followed more or less in the same line, and laid down principles which were resumed and developed in the Reformation. They were all based on the freedom of the individual will, and were the germs of the doctrine that finally dissolved scholasticism."[1]

These remarks betray a confusion of two distinct and very different matters; the doctrine of the Church concerning the necessity of divine grace in the soul, in order that good works should be meritorious of a supernatural reward, and the teaching of the Church on the necessity of a good intention that a work may be morally good. The principles relating to the latter question which have been already exposed are fundamentally rooted in the

[1] Pp. 57–8.

Catholic philosophy of free will and the nature of a human action; their recognition is as old as Catholic theology and philosophy. The moral goodness of conduct and its merit depends on different elements altogether. In Catholic doctrine a work may be good in every respect, yet, if it proceeded only from the natural faculties of man it has no relation or proportion to an everlasting reward. The bearing of this distinction may be grasped from the fact that the Church maintained (against the Reformers) that Pagans destitute of grace could perform good actions; good, *ex tota causa*, in every respect; but such actions were not meritorious, or deserving of everlasting reward. The claim of authority nowise conflicts with the supremacy of conscience in the moral sphere. The authority of conscience and the obligation of following its dictates has always been recognized from the time of the Fathers, who explained the text of St. Paul (Romans xiv. 23), *Omne autem quod non est ex fide peccatum est*, as meaning that all action contrary to conscience is sinful. In the Decretals, Lib. II. tit. 13, c. 13. Innocent III. repeats the same doctrine. Whatever is done contrary to conscience tends to hell (*ædificat ad gehennam*). St. Thomas' teaching is the same: All will at variance with right reason, whether the estimate of reason be right or erroneous, is wrong, so that whoever acts against conscience sins. (Quodlibit III., q. 27.) St. Bonaventure says: To act against conscience is always sinful, because it involves a contempt of God. (In II. Dist. 39, Art. 1, q. 3, ad. 3.) Such is and has always been the moral doctrine of authoritative Catholic theology; it is impossible to adduce any contradictory statement from its accredited exponents.

What the Church did claim was the right to give an infallible, authoritative, and consequently binding, interpretation of revelation. She claims, too, the right to make laws imposing a conscientious obligation upon her mem-

bers. But the right of legislation in a ruler is perfectly consistent with the sovereignty of conscience in the subject. A good citizen feels himself morally bound to obey the laws of the country—does he thereby abdicate the right and renounce the obligation of regulating his conduct by his conscience? All just laws become a part of the objective rule of action, to which conscience conforms when determining the course of conduct. The confessional did not and does not supplant conscience. A confessor's office is to instruct and guide; to point out the line of duty, and the measure of obligation; if he finds that an erroneous view of duty is entertained, he is called upon to rectify it. But while a decided conviction, either preceptive or prohibitive, exists he is bound to respect it. If, for example, a Non-catholic honestly believes that Catholic worship is idolatrous the teaching of theology is that, as long as such a conviction remains in his mind, he would grievously sin by joining the Catholic Church.

The information that Abelard was the first to maintain the value of the good will, as a moral condition, and that his views on the subject were an outcome of the controversies on predestination and the sovereignty of God, will provoke a smile on the face of any one familiar with Catholic theology and its historic development. The subsequent statement, viz. that Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas followed more or less in the same direction and laid down principles which were resumed and developed in the Reformation, is still more ridiculous. *More or less in the same direction!* when St. Thomas categorically affirms the inviolability of conscience and the absolute necessity of good will, and both truths are implied in almost every page of his theology. When will writers who undertake to dogmatically tell the world what we believe, and to propound oracularly philosophic analyses of our ethical development, recognize that the first requisite for the undertaking is that they have some just and

accurate knowledge of the subject? If they would fulfil this very necessary condition, we should not so often find them responsible for views filled with such confusion, inaccuracy and misrepresentation as pervades Professor Hyslop's summary of Ecclesiastical Christianity.

In his next section treating of the influence of the Reformation he again confuses distinct issues:—"A brief summary of the influences of the Reformation will include the following points: First, the restoration of the inner and subjective principle of morality, due to the doctrine of justification by faith; second, the transfer of the idea of authority from the Church to conscience and revelation; third, the freedom and responsibility of the individual for his moral and spiritual salvation, thus setting aside human mediation and influence from without; fourth, the separation of morality and religion, at least in their sanction and object, if not in regard to their source or ultimate." [1]

The implication that the Church's claim of authority is incompatible with the sovereignty of conscience is already disposed of. The principles of the Reformation maintained that the individual is independent of any human authority, and eliminate from the economy of salvation sacerdotal ministration and sacramental media. But most of the Reformers taught the doctrine of predestination, which ascribes salvation exclusively to the Divine decrees; they denied free will—two tenets which utterly abolish human responsibility.

Luther maintained, as do the determinists of to-day, that necessity controls all things, and that the human act is the act of God. This principle he calls a thunderbolt by which free will is utterly demolished.[2] He asserts that

[1] Hyslop: Elements of Ethics, p. 62.

[2] De servo arbitrio adv. Erasmus Roterod. Opp. Ed. Lat. Jena tom. III f. 170. See Symbolism, p. 32, by John Adams Moehler. Eng. Translation, by J. B. Robertson, London, 1894. The references for the subsequent citations of the Reformers will be found in this work.

free will is an attribute of God alone, and that to attribute it to man is blasphemous.[1] Melancthon charges the sophists and theologians with having established so firmly among Christians the pernicious doctrine of free will that it is impossible to root it out.[2] It is only fair to Luther to add that, unlike Melancthon, he subsequently modified his teaching on this point. The characteristic dogma of Calvin's doctrine is that the salvation of man depends on the irrevocable decree of God, who from all eternity has decreed that one shall be saved and another damned. His entire work, *De Æterna Prædestinatione*, is an argument against free will. The doctrine of justification by faith does not involve any implication of the comparative importance in moral good works of the subjective element good will over the objective morality of the act itself. In the controversy between the Reformers and the Church, their position was that spiritual regeneration and salvation is obtained through faith alone; and that faith consists in a full confidence in the efficacy of Christ's merits imparted to the soul. This strong confidence is the good will in the Reformers' acceptation of the word. Provided this good will endures the character of a man's moral conduct is not to disturb the conscience; for even though man sins his sins are not imputed to him. This view of justification, instead of exalting the moral good will over the objective good work, deprived moral conduct, in its subjective as well as its objective aspect, of all value. Justification by faith meant, not the transfer of weight from the external work to the internal intention, but the abrogation, for the believers, of the moral law. And this abrogation did not mean for the Reformers that, provided a man believes in Christ, good conduct will necessarily follow: it meant that faith in Christ is of such overwhelming importance, that in its presence, the goodness or badness of conduct, the entire moral law ceases to be a matter of any importance

[1] Moehler, p. 193. [2] Ibid., p. 33.

to conscience. Such is the view of justification which pervades the writings of the Reformers. One or two citations will illustrate. Luther takes pains to expressly declare this doctrine in a manner which provides against any misunderstanding. "It is of very great importance that we should rightly know and understand how the law hath been abolished. For such a knowledge, that the law is abolished, and totally set aside, that it can no longer be a ground of accusation and condemnation against the believers in Christ, confirms our doctrine on faith. From this our consciences may derive solace, especially in their moments of great fearful struggle and mental anguish. I have before earnestly and frequently said, and repeat it now again (for this is a matter which can never be too often and too strongly urged), that a Christian, who grasps and lays hold on Christ, is subject to no manner of law, but is free from the law, so that it can neither terrify nor condemn him. This Isaiah teacheth in the text cited by St. Paul: Give glory, thou barren one, that bearest not."[1]

But perhaps Luther meant by law, not the moral code, but the legal and ceremonial observances of the Jewish law? He anticipates this possible misinterpretation of his thought:—"When Thomas of Aquino and other schoolmen assert, that the law hath been abolished, they pretend that the Mosaic ordinances respecting judicial affairs and other secular matters (which they call judicialia) and in like manner the laws respecting ceremonies and the services of the Temple (kirchwerken), were after the death of Christ pernicious, and on that account were set aside and abolished. But when they say the Ten Commandments (which they call moralia) are not to be abrogated, they themselves understand not what they assert and lay down.

"But thou, when thou speakest of the abolition of the law, be mindful that thou speakest of the law, and understand thereby the whole law, making no distinction be-

[1] Moehler, p. 178.

tween civil laws, ceremonies, and Ten Commandments. For what St. Paul saith, that through Christ we are redeemed from the anathema of the law; he speaketh certainly and properly of the whole law, and especially of the Ten Commandments, since these alone accuse the conscience before God and terrify it; whereas the other two species of law, that treat, so to speak, of civil affairs and ceremonies, do not so. Therefore, we say, that even the Ten Commandments, have no right to accuse nor to alarm the conscience, wherein Christ reigns by His grace; since Christ hath abolished this right of the law, when He became an anathema for us."[1]

Elsewhere he still more explicitly affirms that the abolition of works means, not any shifting of value from the objective to the subjective element, but the denial of any value to conduct ethically good. "Sin lustily, but be yet more lusty in faith and rejoice in Christ who is the conqueror of Sin, of Death and of the World. Sin we must, so long as we remain here. It suffices that through the riches of the Glory of God, we know the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world; from Him no sin will sever us, though a million times a day we should fornicate or commit murder."[2] Elsewhere he teaches that faith and morality are to be kept separate, and that, consequently, a man's moral conduct has no business to disturb his conscience. "We must thus carefully distinguish between both; placing the Gospel in the kingdom of heaven above, and the law on the earth below, calling and holding the righteousness of the gospel a heavenly and godly righteousness, and that of the law a human and earthly one. And thou must separate and distinguish the righteousness of the gospel as peculiarly and carefully from the righteousness of the law, as our Lord God hath separated and divided the heavens from the earth, light from darkness and day from night. So is the righteousness of the

[1] Moehler, p. 178. [2] Ibid., p. 131, note.

gospel light and day; the righteousness of the law darkness and night; and would to God we could divide them still further one from the other."

"Therefore as often as we have to treat of, and to deal with faith, with heavenly righteousness, with conscience, etc., etc., let us cut off the law, and let it be confined to this lower world. But if the question be about works then let us kindle the light which belongeth to works of legal justice and to the night. Thus will the dear sun, and the clear light of the gospel and of grace, shine and illumine by day, the light of the law shine and illumine by night. And so these two things must ever be separated one from the other, in our minds and our hearts, that the conscience when it feels its sins and is terrified, may say to itself, now thou art on earth; and, therefore, let the lazy ass there work, and serve, and ever carry the burden imposed upon it." [1]

It would be interesting to follow any process of reasoning calculated to prove the often-repeated assertion that the doctrine of the Reformers tended to the establishment of the value of the ethical good will. Indirectly, indeed, their teaching led to an ethical system in which the good will is made the be-all and the end-all of morality. The moralism of Kant is a reaction towards the rehabilitation of the moral good, and the restoration of that value to conduct which is abolished in the theory of the Reformers.

With one of Professor Hyslop's statements we agree; it is that to the influence of the Reformation is due "the separation of morality and religion, at least in their sanction and object, if not in regard to their source or ultimate." Luther's doctrine of an essential and inward opposition between religion and morality, assigning to religion an eternal, to morality a merely temporal value, has profoundly affected modern Ethics. Erasmus said

[1] Moehler, pp. 185–6.

that the reformation was like a comedy, for it ended in marriage. Not invariably, for, in the sphere of conduct, it ends in the theoretical divorce of morality and religion. Positivists, no doubt, are of the opinion that this result redounds to the credit of Protestantism. But sincere Protestants, of whatever denomination, who still believe in revelation, when they observe the trend of modern scientific thought to turn this alleged independence into a proof that the belief in a moral Ruler of the Universe is an antiquated superstition, which modern enlightenment has outgrown, will not feel that the Reformation is honored by being saddled with the responsibility of having given the initiative to the separation of religion and morality.

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY.

THE recognition that man is destined by his Creator, to the end made apparent in the foregoing analysis, by establishing the grounds of general obligation, affords the base on which rest all the duties incumbent on the moral agent. A moral duty originates from a relationship existing between intelligent beings. For man there exist three objective terms for such relationship—Infinite Intelligence, his fellowmen, and himself. From his relations to the Divine Intelligence arise the duties of religion; from his relation to his fellowmen, social duties which form so large a part, but do not constitute the whole of the moral life. Besides these two branches of duties, man has duties and obligations which directly regard himself alone. When independent morality is obliged to give some account of the self-regarding duties it is involved in an insurmountable difficulty. If the happiness of others is assigned as the moral end, it is impossible to show any reason why a man is bound to practise the virtues which regard himself alone, and when they attempt the task ethical teachers of this school are driven to various subterfuges. Professor Fiske tries to cut the knot, by roundly affirming that the moral and immoral in Ethics are not co-terminous with right and wrong. "There are many duties," he says, "which as immediately concerning none but the individual are technically neither moral nor immoral, but which, nevertheless, are right or wrong. Overeating, for example, which can hardly be termed immoral, and which the current hedonism mildly

characterizes as imprudent, may, from a religious point of view, be regarded as wrong or sinful."[1] Truly, a frank confession of the futility of hedonistic Ethics. When philosophers are driven to the necessity of maintaining that words must mean something else than what the accepted usage of all who speak the language presumes them to mean, it is clear that their philosophy is in conflict with common-sense. In plain English, as far as ethical questions are concerned, the terms *moral* and *immoral* are convertible with the terms right and wrong. If a speaker declares that such or such an action is wrong, everybody who hears him understands him to mean that the performance of such an act is forbidden by conscience, the moral guide. In Mr. Fiske's view, gluttony is an act against religion, but not against morality; a glutton is irreligious, but not immoral. Consequently, a man who acknowledges no religious sanction may indulge in gluttonous excess with a clear conscience. In like manner he may conscientiously violate any or all of the many self-regarding virtues which Mr. Fiske acknowledges do exist. Positivists stoutly contend that a man discarding all religious belief can find in their ethical principles valid grounds for a bond of duty as strict, and an ideal of conduct as lofty, as can be established by any theistic reference. Mr. Fiske would be the last to dispute this claim, yet his doctrine stated above implies that any one who does not acknowledge the obligations of religion may, without violating any moral precept, or becoming false to the highest ethical ideal, indulge in gluttony, or any excess which violates the duties which man owes to himself. Theistic writers have sometimes said things much too harsh about the impossibility of a virtuous infidel, but, coming from a friend, this is the most unkindest cut of all.

His remark that the current hedonism only character-

[1] Cosmic Philosophy, Vol. II., p. 456.

izes such faults as imprudent is correct; but he might with equal truth have added that imprudence is the only stigma which hedonism, as long as it remains within its own principles, can affix to any fault, however grave.

The duties which bind man with regard to himself are of as strictly moral a nature as any others, and arise in the same way from his nature as an intelligent being. The directive moral faculty, reason, is a logical faculty. Reflecting on his conduct, the agent becomes the object logically distinct from the thinking subject; thus a moral relation between the thinking subject, as the director and controller, and the conceived object of thought, the personality which is to be directed and controlled. Over-eating, for example, is to be avoided, not because it violates any merely religious precept or counsel, but because reason declares that immoderation in the use of goods is irrational. Because the act involves an assertion of a lower appetite, which, in human nature, ought to be subordinate to reason, against the dictates of reason, it is contrary to the good of the rational nature.

From the same source whence arises duty, springs its correlate, right, in the juridical sense. Because man is destined by his Creator to an end, which he is bound to pursue, he must have at his disposal the means necessary to attain that end. These means include whatever is required for the development of his activities in the realization of the good of his nature. This power vested in him implies a correlative obligation in all others restraining them from interfering with him in using the means necessary to the end of his life. This power invested with moral inviolability is what is understood by right. The practical application of this prinicple is the source of all the various rights which pertain to man as an individual and as a member of society.

The moral law is subjective in the human mind, objectively expressed in the order of the Universe, and

finds its eternal prototype in the Divinity Itself. When conscience, or reason presiding in the field of conduct, points out the path of duty, it is deciding not as an autonomous authority. Its judgment is the judgment of the Supreme Power upon whom all things depend, not speaking from outside but in man, calling upon the motor faculty, the will, to adjust itself to the Divine plan which embraces all the Universe. The will, in virtue of its freedom, may obey or not; but disobedience does not rid ourselves of the everlasting yea within, which still affirms the necessity which our rational nature is under to pursue its proper good. Our consciousness tells us that we do not impose the law upon ourselves. It claims authority over us whether we so will or not. It is not the "free spirit imposing a law upon itself"—if the spirit were the author of this Law, then it might impose the bond of obligation, or abstain from doing so, but we know that we cannot rid ourselves of it; we may violate it—we cannot abolish it.

In obedience to the law of duty, man attains his perfection. Spencer expresses a profound truth, when he claims that the end of life is the full development of life. This full development of life consists in the development towards its perfection, by the attainment of its proper object or good, of each individual energy, in mutual harmony, and due subordination to the supreme regulative faculty. The end of life is reached by the attainment of the good of the rational will. This consists in the realization, through all the sphere of conduct, of that order and harmony which is the expression of the Eternal, All Holy and Inviolable Will of the Creator. When the subject will acts in complete acknowledged subjection and harmony with the Divine, then we reach our perfection by the realization of the moral good. The moral law is a part of that grand plan along the lines of which, impelled by the Power which makes for righteousness, all Creation moves. It is incomparably the highest and the noblest

part; it is not of the earth, earthy, nor does it trace its beginning to the contingencies embraced in time; its source is in the Eternal Verities. Because his destiny is controlled and regulated by it, man is the noblest object of Creation; for whilst all other creatures are borne along blindly according to the laws which regulate their activity, the rational being is gifted with the power of determining himself, and thereby becoming a free co-operator with the designs of Almighty Power. The slightest morally good action, inasmuch as it is the free realization by a conscious agent of the Divine design, is of more value than the mightiest manifestation of force displayed in the revolution of solar systems. The establishment of the rules of conduct on a scientific basis is possible only when we build upon Eternal Truth and Goodness; any other foundation when subjected to the solvent of logical inspection proves but provisional, incomplete and unstable; conversely a rational investigation of the moral edifice, if logically pursued, leads us to God.

Three possible ways of constructing a science of morals, or, in other words, of giving a logical account of moral obligation and all that is implied in it, are open to us. One is that of which the outlines have been sketched in the preceding pages; the moral value of action is sought for in the relation of the faculty to its proper object—the good. Another way which suggests itself is to seek the source of moral value in the good will alone, or the formal element of the intention, without any reference to the result of action and ignoring the existence of a tendency in the faculty toward its natural objects. Again, the result of the action may be taken as the determinant of moral good and a universal law of conduct sought in the principle of utility. Under one or other of these three heads all ethical systems may be reduced. Outside these three principles, there is no other conceivable as a determinant of moral value.

The validity of our own theory which has been positively proved will be confirmed by demonstrating that those of the other classes are worthless. All the systems belonging to the different schools cannot be reviewed. But if the best and strongest of each class is tried and found wanting, we may legitimately conclude that the weaker ones possess still less value. In the three systems which may claim to be representative, we encounter what have been hailed as the most successful of modern attempts to construct an independent science of morals, dispensing morality from the necessity of invoking or appealing to the truth of God's existence for its supreme value in human life.

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CHAPTER VI.

IMPORT OF THE RELATION BETWEEN NATURAL RELIGION AND MORALITY.

THE preceding exposition of the elements which enter into the moral life indicates that the relation between it and the religious sentiment is many-sided. General affirmations or general denials, so frequent among ethical and religious writers, that morality depends entirely on religion, or religion on morality, are too sweeping. Whilst advocates of the necessity of religion sometimes discredit their cause by attempting to prove too much, many of our opponents believe they have put its claims out of court, when they have established the possibility of a moral code, and a recognition of validity in the moral judgment, springing from reason alone. When they have shown that a reference to future rewards and punishments is not involved directly in the distinction between right and wrong, or in the voice of conscience, they triumphantly conclude that, therefore, there is no essential connection between morality and religion. Such a line of argument fails to disprove the connection; for it falls entirely wide of the mark. The efficacy of the religious sanction consisting in a belief in future retribution undoubtedly is a prominent feature in the connection; but it does not essentially form the relationship; it is a necessary implication, not a constituent cause. While we maintain that for the realization of any approach to a sound moral life among men, as they are, and as they always have been, the religious sanction is necessary,—and the history of mankind bears out the assertion—we admit that the moral law may be recognized and obeyed by a man, with-

out any conscious religious reference. The arguments adduced to prove the entire independence of morality prove this, and they prove no more. When this conclusion is established it falls far short of cutting morality adrift from religion. The moral law is implanted in our nature; it may make itself efficient in the control of conduct, profoundly felt even although the agent does not admit the truths which it logically involves. Martineau has admirably expressed the attitude of such a mind: "The profound sense of the authority and even sacredness of the moral law is often conspicuous among men, whose thoughts apparently never turn to superhuman things, but who are penetrated by a secret worship of honor, truth, and right. Were this noble state of mind brought out of its impulsive state, and made to unfold its implicit contents, it would indeed reveal a source higher than human nature for the august authority of righteousness. But it is undeniable that the authority may be felt when it is not seen, felt, *as if it were* the mandate of a Perfect Will, while yet there is no overt recognition of such will, *i. e.* conscience may act as human before it is discovered to be divine. To the agent himself its whole history may seem to lie in his own personality and his visible social relations; and it shall nevertheless serve as his oracle, though it may be hid from him *who* it is that utters it. The moral consciousness, while thus pausing short of its complete development, fulfils the conditions of responsible life and makes character real and virtue possible."[1] From the innate impulse of the rational nature towards its proper object, some men may pursue the moral good, without looking beyond to the ultimate end towards which it leads. Conscious of moral obligation, they may fulfil its dictates without asking themselves whence it derives its authority. In like manner, without recognizing any religious motive, they may find, in secondary motives,

[1] Study of Religion, Vol. I., Introduction, p. 20.

self-approbation, the approbation of others, or the sentiment of benevolence, sufficient inspiration to good conduct. But everybody will admit that such cases are very rare exceptions to the normal manifestations of human nature; and morality must be founded on principles efficacious for mankind in general, not merely for a few abnormal specimens.

The possibility of a man's obeying his conscience without demanding any ultimate credentials for its authority, nowise disproves the fact that such credentials do exist. A small number—and it will be conceded that the number is very small indeed—may not question the sovereign right of reason, to determine the path of human conduct, and even though duty is irksome, may need no other motive to follow it than the goodliness of duty itself; yet the great majority of men, before they sacrifice their own inclination, do question the authority of conscience, and do not feel so powerfully attracted by the beauty of virtue. They insist upon an ultimate reason for their obedience; and they want a guarantee for the infallibility of the doctrine: Be virtuous, and you will be happy. There is no stability for morality short of tracing duty down to the relationship which exists between man and his Creator. This dependence of the rational being on the Divine, Creative Intelligence is the common root of religion and morality. Arising, as they do, from the same source, and evolving from different bearings of a single problem, the end and destiny of man, their spheres interpenetrate, and their developments interlace. The recognition and expression, internal and external, of our dependence on God, constitute religion and the religious field.

Another of the stock arguments for independent morality is that religious persons are often immoral. The sophism scarcely deserves refutation. Persons professing religion may lead immoral lives; whitened sepulchres have always been unsavory features in the moral landscape. In minor

details, even the just man may fall seven times a day. But the habitually religious man endeavors to obey and honor God; and obedience to God embraces obedience to conscience; as far as he fails to observe the moral law, so far does he upbraid himself with failure in his religious duty. Besides this penetration of the moral field by the religious principle, the full expansion of moral obligation envelops the religious ground; for first among the obligations which demand to be realized in conduct are the duties which we owe to God. All duties arise from the relationship of the moral agent with others. The first relationship is between him and his Creator. From it arise his highest duties. Any view of a moral code which does not embrace the duties of religion is mutilated. Those who deny the existence of God, or explain it in a manner which is equivalent to a denial, can, consistently with their philosophy, maintain that human duties can be concerned only with other human beings, or, perhaps, as a kind of compensation for the loss of the religious province to the moral sway, they will throw in the lower animals, as beings having rights which we are bound to respect. But what is to be said of those who, professing a belief in God, the Sovereign Master and Ruler of the Universe, hold that the duties of religion are not a branch of morality? If we admit the existence of God, in any Christian sense of the word, we cannot deny that we have duties towards Him; that we owe worship, love and obedience to Him. Upon what grounds, then, can we eliminate from the field of rational conduct our relations towards the Supreme Being?

Our life may be regarded from two different standpoints, the religious and the moral. In both aspects we have the same essential truths, standing towards each other in the same relationships. A landscape presents various appearances when seen from different points of view, yet the objects which compose it do not change. Similarly, as

we shift from the religious to the moral standpoint, though we do not apprehend the facts in the same order, nor in the same perspective, yet they are essentially the same. In analyzing what is contained in the relationship between religion and morality, it is of little importance at which point we begin. The same fundamental truth underlies both. This truth is the existence of a Supreme Creator, who has called into being and destined to an end, the Universe with all that it contains. Amongst the things that make up the Universe, man is distinguished from the others by the powers which have been given to him of recognizing what his end is, and of regulating his conduct to that constituted end.

The entire treatment of the subject by those authors who plead the cause of divorce between religion and morality, starts on the false principle that these sentiments must be considered as two distinct elements of human consciousness. With these writers the ethical and the religious sanction are assumed to be two entirely separate motives of conduct; the religious cannot be rational, nor the rational religious. This false notion is the necessary consequence of the error already alluded to, which takes future retribution as the be-all and end-all of the religious reference to morals. But the true conception of the two sanctions brings both into harmony: the rational, when its full implication is evolved, ends in the religious; and the religious requires the rational for its basis. Faith implies reason, and future retribution presumes the recognition of moral consciousness. The eminent psychologist Professor Baldwin very truly says, in the conclusion of his brilliant analysis of the growth of the religious and the moral sentiments: "The religious sentiment is, in a sense, an added thing; not mechanically added at all, but considered as lying less near the centre of personal growth, and as being a further outcome in the life of emotion, of the process of growth. The individual could not believe

in a good deity, until he had conceived the good person, and become aware of the obligation in his own breast, impelling to the achievement of like good personality. Before this the thought of deity is without the attribute goodness, because self thought is without it. There is then a continuous progress in the religious life keeping pace with the ethical life." [1] Moral sanction cannot correctly be divided into religious and ethical, as two mutually exclusive ideas. As the author just quoted says, in his criticism of the contrary view expressed by Mr. Kidd in his *Social Evolution* :—" Instead of considering the religious sanction as the leading motive of human progress, and that despite the lack of the 'rational' sanction, we should say that the religious is an outgrowth and constant index of the ethical sanction." [2]

Let us examine the meaning of life from the moral point of view. The supreme good of man, the end which in attainment is to confer on him the perfection of his nature, by satisfying all his tendencies and faculties, is God, the Infinite and Supreme Good alone capable of filling the faculties of mind and heart. In creating us for that end, and thereby imposing on us the obligation of seeking it, the Creator must have placed at our disposal all the means necessary to fulfil our destiny. And thus in the very nature of our existence as contingent beings we have the basis of all duties and rights. Anterior to all other relationships, the human being, as a rational creature of God, has imposed on him duties, and is in possession of rights. But his nature is such that the pursuit of his perfection, by the adjustment of his conduct to the universal order, expressing the law according to which he should reach his destined end, requires him to enter into social relations of different kinds with his fellows. Society is a means of overwhelming im-

[1] Mental Development, pp. 441–442.

[2] Ibid., p. 442.

portance, and has been imposed by the Creator upon man, as a necessary means to his perfection. But it remains a means, and not the end of human nature. Bringing our reason to interpret the content of that obligation which lies upon us to pursue the end of our being, we come to recognize the various kinds of duties which we are called upon to discharge.

All duty implies a relationship, a moral relationship existing between persons; there can be nothing due, unless there is conceived some one to whom it is owed. Such relationship exists between us and, first, the Supreme Intelligence from whom we derive existence; secondly, between our directive, reflective faculty, reason, and our other faculties and activities, objectively considered as under the direction of reason; and, thirdly, between ourselves and the other persons with whom human society brings us into relation. We perceive, therefore, that we have duties towards God, towards ourselves, and towards others.

The relationship which exists between us and God is one of total dependence; dependence of our existence upon Him as Absolute Being, dependence of our intelligence on Him as Supreme Truth, and dependence of our will on Him, as the Supreme Good. If I totally thus depend upon Him, I cannot realize in my conduct, the necessary conformity with the universal order, unless, in the first place, I conform my will to His. The recognition of this *dependence* is essentially what constitutes religion. The expression, internal and external, of our dependence, by prayer and worship, the formal duties of religion, is, at the same time, the first obligation of the moral law. To fail in these duties towards God, is to fail in the first and fundamental requisites of rational conduct. Our moral life, however perfect it may be, as far as the observance of obligations arising from other relationships is concerned, is marred in its most essential feature, if it does not

embrace the offices of religion. Our dependence on God, calling for the conformity of our to His Will, requires that we obey, in all our conduct, what we conceive to be the expression of that Will. This obedience is a duty of religion. Accordingly, as we pass from the duties which arise from our relation to God to those which arise from all other relationships, the religious element of obedience to the Will of God enters into all conduct, which is thereby brought within the sphere of religion. Hence, unless our entire conduct is in conformity with the moral law, our religious obligation, however completely we may discharge the primary duties, is violated. And if our conduct in our relations to ourselves and others is a disobedience of the Divine Will, our profession of dependence, by formal acts of religion, is contradicted by our practical behavior; nor can our life be pleasing to Him in whose sight "obedience is better than sacrifice." The truly religious life will necessarily display the practice of all moral virtues, those which regard ourselves and those called into play in our dealings with our fellow-men. "Religion," says St. Thomas, "contains two kinds of acts, those which are formal and immediate, as sacrifice, prayer, and other similar kinds; and, secondly, those which it produces by means of virtues which it commands, and thus ordains to God."[1]

Considering himself as the creature of God, each person perceives that there are obligations binding him to certain duties with regard to himself. He is not the absolute master of his life or his faculties, to dispose of them at his will; he cannot, at his own pleasure, elect what shall be the end of his pursuit, or on what sort of enjoyment he shall fix his happiness. His end is constituted for him, his path is marked out by the law of universal order. He must bring his lower appetite under the control of reason, and make other goods subservient and secondary to the

[1] Summa, 2a, 2ae, q. 81, art. 1, ad primum.

supreme good of his rational nature. His life is a sacred trust given him for a purpose, by the Master of life and death, and he must exercise reasonable care in its preservation and harmonious development. In the use of temporal goods and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense, the virtue of temperance must control his conduct.

Coming into relations with other persons, he recognizes in every one a being of equal dignity with himself, enjoying equal rights and bound by similar duties, because all are made for the same Supreme Good. Since, then, all are on the same footing he is called upon to treat humanity in others as of the same importance as it is in his own person. This obligation imposes on him the duty of love; of assisting all with whom he comes in contact, by effectual aid, as far as he may, and by the encouragement of example, to the attainment of their Supreme Good. The law of charity is no hedonistic principle of contributing to the good of others in order that greater satisfaction, either from the consciousness of having helped another, or from the resulting general benefit to society, in which the agent has an interest, may accrue to him. It is a fulfilment of duty from reverence for the supreme law of righteousness. The rights of each imply corresponding duties in others. If I have a right to the means necessary for my rational life, in the development of my faculties and the attainment of my perfection, reason tells me that all other persons have similar rights, which I am called upon to respect. Hence the principle: DO GOOD; LIVE ACCORDING TO THE UNIVERSAL ORDER, calls upon me to respect in my activity the rights of others. As truth is the proper good of the intellect, and a true knowledge of facts in innumerable circumstances of life a primary necessity for the rational and moral direction of action, each one is bound not to interfere with another, in the attainment of truth. Again, the multipled relations of social life cannot be sustained unless veracity and fidelity to

promises are observed. Hence, the moral law calls for the practice of these duties. Similarly the virtue of justice requires that the goods of others, life, reputation, material property be respected by all.

In the two forms of association which are of deepest import in human life—the conjugal union, and civil society—the moral field is penetrated by the religious influence. In the primary society which nature makes necessary for the conservation of the race, the individual is associated with another to become, in a special manner, a co-operator with God, the first cause, in calling into existence intelligent beings like himself, destined to the same Supreme Good. The primary end of this union is not the proper good or advantage of the individual, but the continuation of the divine economy of the universe, by the conservation of the human race. If man is anywhere called upon to recognize himself as dependent on the Supreme Being, it is surely in the relationship which brings him into most intimate association with Creative Power and Providential Wisdom. In the functions here concerned there is, from the nature of things, a special danger of disorder. Their activity, like every other, is guaranteed by a tendency to seek their proper good and satisfaction, and, as on their employment depends the conservation of the race, the Creator has insured its continuance, by making that tendency exceptionally strong. At the same time, unlike all the other faculties, the primary end of these functions is not the good of the individual, but of other beings not yet in existence. Thus, the rational order requires that this the strongest impulse of nature in the individual be subordinated to an extrinsic end. When the situation is such, there is imminent danger of a serious conflict between the demands of duty and the promptings of self-love.

In the entire range of human conduct, there is no element on which the interests of pure morality depend so

much as in the proper regulation of the sexual instincts and relations. The passions there involved, when not controlled by reason, become of all the most potent factors for degradation. They have been, more than any other influence, the cause of demoralization for many peoples, and societies, as they are for individuals. And the review of religious development shows us that the most revolting phases of immorality have arisen when a perverted religious sense made the principle of fecundity an object or an adjunct of worship. A truer instinct, however, has been manifested, it may be said, by the human race at large, in the practically universal custom of placing marriage and the sanctity of the family under the protection of religion. Not alone all peoples of any degree of civilization, but even the savage Bushman obeys the impulse of human reason in recognizing in the conjugal union, a concern of supreme religious importance.[1] If we recall the teachings of the religions which have been made the subject of our study, we shall see that the due position of woman has been given to her in proportion as the religious influence has dominated the sexual relations. And the truest test of the general morality of any people is the measure in which the dignity of woman is acknowledged. The surest index of the corruption of morality and the decay of religion is a prevailing disregard of the sanctity of marriage. The zenith and the nadir of pagan morality are the early life of Ancient Rome, when religion consecrated marriage, and made the home the shrine of the divinity ; and, on the other hand, the condition of Greece, when the wife was rated lower than the hetairæ, and unnatural vice was associated with all the grace of art and culture. The supreme interests of morality, and even the temporal welfare of society, are safeguarded only when religion, watching over them, reminds man that his end is not terrestrial enjoyment, and that the strongest of his

[1] See Brinton: Religions of Primitive Peoples, p. 205.

passions have not been given him as means of sensual gratification, but in the interest of other beings, who, like himself, are called into existence by the Supreme Ruler, and destined to attain, through a transitory life, another which shall endure.

When we consider the relations of civil society we find the same implication of religion. The social state is an outcome of human nature. Society is an indispensable means for man to attain that development and perfection of his faculties which reason and innate tendency prompt him to pursue. The existence of society is a part of the natural and moral order; and must be referred to the author of both. It is a condition of that universal order established by God, revealing to reason the criterion of good and evil. Without the recognition that the universal order is the expression of the Divine Will, to which the individual is obliged to conform his conduct, there can be found no principle calling upon us to fulfil the obligations and make the sacrifices which the social good so often requires of us. Unless we acknowledge the religious sanction of the moral law, the good of society can dictate to me a course of conduct just as far as such a course is judged by me to be conformable to my own particular interests. Without some principle antecedent to civil enactment, imposing upon my conscience an obligation of obeying the civil authority, all such authority is but an engine of external coercion, which fails to bind the will, or appeal to the reverence of the heart. Society is a union of intelligent beings towards an end; and whatever may be the academic discussions as to the necessity of authority, as a constituent element in the notion of a society, civil societies, such as tribes, nations, states, can exist only in virtue of some authority which regulates and harmonizes the rights, duties, and interests of the subjects. Authority, then, is an intelligent power to oblige the will of another; such power implies the ex-

istence of a principle of moral obligation; and the ethical inquiry has made it abundantly evident that without taking into account man's relation to the Supreme Ruler there is no principle on which to found a genuine moral obligation, possessing a character such as to call authoritatively for the obedience of the will. Law is a regulative standard of action, and, as such, must derive its validity from a supreme standard of absolute value; this standard, as far as natural reason goes, can be found only in the will of the Creator expressed in the universal order. The essential duty of a state is to affirm the existence of right, and to vindicate its authority to enforce the law of right, upon its members. But the state which ignores the existence of God, and the duties of religion which are the necessary result of our dependent relation towards Him, denies the only truth upon which it can rest its right of legislation, and its executive power. An atheistic state, too, deprives itself of the supreme guarantee of fidelity, of good faith among its members, and the just administration of the laws. If religion is ignored, the sanctity of oaths, which in all ages have been an indispensable influence in the maintenance of society, ceases to exist. Nor can human ingenuity contrive any substitute for it. In all its various and contradictory manifestations of the religious impulse the human mind has, now explicitly, now implicitly, and sometimes with grotesque absurdity, expressed the truth that the civil power is derived from God. We have seen the Rig Veda, the Kings, the Babylonian hymns, the records of ancient Greece and Rome, ascribe the power of the Ruler to the Divine dispensation. Facts illustrating the same tendency among savages have given Spencer the elements of his ghost theory; and in the doctrine of the right divine of kings to govern wrong, we have another illustration of a soul of truth in things erroneous. The early traditions of many people ascribing their laws to the divinity have been preserved in a passage of Dio-

dorus Siculus. "The Egyptians believed their laws to have been communicated to Mnevis by Hermes; the Cretans held that Minos received his laws from Zeus, the Lacedæmonians that Lykurgus received his laws from Apollon. According to the Aryans, their lawgiver, Zathraustes, had received his laws from the Good Spirit; according to the Getae, Zamolxis received his laws from the goddess Hestia; and, according to the Jews, Moses received his laws from the god Iao."[1] Reason, exercising its functions under the aspect which goes by the homely name of common sense affirms, the truth that there can be no obligation where there is no authority to oblige, and we can have no derived authority without going back to an authority which is itself sufficient and independent; and common sense which is, if the expression may be allowed, the instinct of reason, is a surer index of truth than the refinements of philosophers which contradict it.

Regarded, then, in his social as well as his individual aspect, religion is of supreme importance to man. Without it, the moral edifice is deprived of solid principles for support, in every sphere of human conduct. The duties of religion are incumbent on the individual, whether as an isolated person, or a member of society. And for society itself, as a moral organism, the recognition of religious duty becomes a necessity of self-preservation. Atheism of the state is suicide. Finally, another obligation towards religion is incumbent on the state. Civil society has for its object to promote the temporal welfare of man. The universal order, which is the guide of reason in the direction of human action, demands that the secondary and transitory end be subordinated to the supreme end and good. Hence it becomes the imperative duty of the state so to regulate its laws and control the concerns of its subjects as not to hinder them in the pursuit of their supreme good. Even in the temporal order morality

[1] L. I. c. 94. Cited by Max Müller: The Science of Religion, p. 58.

is the chief good of the individual, and the promotion of it as far as is possible becomes a duty of the state. Nor is the state discharging its functions according to the standard of righteousness, if it hinders in any way the fulfilment by its citizens of the first obligations of morality, their duties towards God.

These truths are controverted by modern positivism; they find no place in ethical schemes which have been evolved to suit materialistic or determinist views of the Universe. But they are enforced by the history of the human race. They have received the most emphatic expression from master minds in every age.

Authorities might be piled up indefinitely to illustrate the consensus that prevails as to the necessity of religion for a practical observance of morality. One or two will suffice: In his picture of the ideal state Plato says, "God, as the old tradition declares, holding in His hand, the beginning, middle, and end of all that is, moves, according to His nature, in a straight line towards the accomplishment of His end. Justice always follows Him, and is the punisher of those who fall short of the Divine law. To that law, he who would be happy holds fast, and follows it in all humility and order; but he who is lifted up with pride, or money, or honor, or beauty, who has a soul filled with folly and youth and insolence, and thinks that he has no need of a guide or ruler, but is able himself to be the guide of others, he, I say, is left deserted by God. . . . . Every man ought to make up his mind that he will be one of the followers of God. Henceforth all citizens must be profoundly convinced that the gods are lords and rulers of all that exist, that all events depend upon their word and will, and that mankind is largely indebted to them."[1] In his *Politics*, Aristotle places worship as the first indispensable necessity of the state.[2] Religion was the chief hope of Augustus when he endeavored to reform the disinte-

[1] De Legibus, IV.

[2] Politic. VII. 8.

grating society of Rome. Napoleon was not a religious man, but he knew human nature; and he reluctantly acknowledged that to re-establish society, after it had been flung into chaos by the French Revolution, the reinstatement of religion was an absolute necessity.

As we can find only in the religious view of life a valid principle of right and duty, so only by taking the eternal law of righteousness as the supreme norm of human relations, do we find a safe guarantee of liberty. Without a just title, no power may advance pretensions to claim the submission of subjects. And authority lawfully constituted is valid only as far as its enactments are useful for the common good. The welfare of the subject, not the particular advantage of the ruler, be he one, or be he many, nor the interest of a particular class, is the end to be promoted by the authority which is derived from the Supreme Ruler of all. The true principle of individual and political liberty is expressed by Leo XIII.: "Natura igitur libertatis humanæ quocumque in genere consideretur, tam in personis singulis quam in consociatis, nec minus in eis qui imperant quam in eis qui parent, necessitatem complectitur obtemperandi summæ cuidam æternæque rationi, quae nihil est aliud nisi auctoritas jubentis vetantis Dei. Atque hoc justissimum in homines imperum Dei tantum abest ut libertatem tollat aut ullo modo diminuat, ut potius tueatur, ac perficiat. Suum quippe finem consectari et assequi omnium naturarum est vera perfectio; supremus autem finis, quo libertas aspirare debet humana, Deus est." (Encyc. Libertas.)

Religion embraces the whole man in all the relations of life, in every branch of conduct. Essentially dependent on God, for his being and its activities, all his faculties are to be employed, all his actions directed to the one end which gives life a meaning and a value. With a boundless capacity for truth and beauty and goodness, the human soul finds its happiness only in the source of

all that is true and beautiful and good. Life is but a series of movements towards an end prescribed in the eternal decree of creation. Our life is religious when reason presides over all the other faculties to direct and control all, to subordinate the lesser good and make it a useful means towards the acquirement of that which alone is Absolute Goodness, the Alpha and Omega of human existence. Guided thus by reason, conduct displays a full conformity with the moral law. The sum total of life's philosophy has long ago been succinctly expressed by the ancient sage: "Fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is the whole man."

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CHAPTER VII.

SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

THE conception of man as a free rational agent, fulfilling the purpose of creative wisdom, by regulating, according to the law written in his intellect, his activities, towards his development and the attainment of his supreme good, is reason's solution of the ethical problem. But in calling this the solution of reason, we do not mean to say that reason has actually discovered its leading principles, or developed them into their ultimate conclusions. In the human mind, indeed, there has always prevailed a haunting sense of a mysterious identity or relationship between the law of conscience and the laws which, to use the Greek poet's expression, are from everlasting. The practical codes which have prevailed amongst various peoples, whilst evincing on many points a just perception of right and wrong, produced a moral ideal marred with gross blemishes. And, imperfect as has been the perception of true morality, the knowledge possessed has seldom been made the guide of life. The endeavors of reason have resulted in fatal errors in the moral, and still more disastrous notions in the religious, sphere. Human history bears indisputable testimony to the failure of reason to solve the perplexities of the moral problem, and construct a theory of conduct, to which it could give its own unqualified approbation. Although the eternal law of creative wisdom is ever written large across the Universe, and the human mind is capable of forming for itself a copy, more or less blurred, of that divinely established order, yet, from the visible things that are made, reason,

in the greater part of the race, failed to rise to a knowledge of the Creator. And even these who did reach an approximation to the truth did not glorify God. From error and infidelity to conscience followed profound disorder in the moral life. But God became, in another and more direct manner, the Teacher of mankind, by the means of supernatural revelation. In the higher dispensation of Grace, the eternal law of divine righteousness has been once more placed within the grasp of human reason. A pupil may stand helpless before the intricacies and obscurities of a mathematical problem. The master indicates the correct answer, and marks out the line of solution. Immediately the mind of the disciple faces the difficulties, elucidates the obscurities, and perceives, in the effulgence of evidence, the truth which it had vainly sought. Through the divine pedagogy of the Gospel, reason reaches not alone a knowledge of the higher order of Grace, but also, concurrently, the truths of morality. Grace comes, not to destroy, but to strengthen and elevate nature. The moral law is taken up in the law of the Gospel; its contents are developed, its dark places made clear by the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. The creature is brought nearer to the Creator by having added to his nature the principle of a higher life, giving him power to become a son of God. The relation of creature and Creator is clothed in a new aspect, and the tendency of faculty to its proper object becomes the bond uniting the tenderest of fathers to a well-beloved son.

In the order of Grace and the order of nature the end of life is the same—the knowledge and love of God, leading finally to union with Him. The supernatural life is a parallel to the natural, on an incomparably higher plane; all the moral elements in the lower find analogous elements in the higher. In the supernatural the radical principle of activity is sanctifying grace. To the nat-

ural light of reason corresponds that of Divine Revelation; the norm of action, expressed in reason and the universal order, receives its complement and confirmation in the supernatural law of the Gospel. The theological virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity, which accompany Grace, become the immediate principles of action, corresponding to and elevating the natural faculties, intellect and will. Faith enables the intellect to rise to the knowledge of Divine Truth, to which it holds fast, not in the light of evidence, but on the infallible testimony of God. By Hope the will, naturally tending to the good, receives its supernatural motive, and the power to make it efficient as a mainspring of moral action. By Charity it is provided with the power to adhere to God, as the end of the supernatural order. Thus man, not as a mere creature, but as a child, sharing in the inheritance of Christ, the firstborn of many brethren, is equipped with all the means necessary to pursue the good in this life, and to attain it in the other, where Hope shall be realized, where the obscurity of Faith shall be dissolved in the vision face to face, and Love shall be perfected in possession of the Good.

The first precept of reason, the compendium of the moral law, Do good and shun evil, is illuminated by a ray of light from the innermost essence of the Divine nature, and the cold call of duty is transformed into pleadings of Infinite Love: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul. The law of life is to realize in conduct a perfect correspondence with the order of absolute Goodness. The moral ideal is achieved in its full perfection when life is regulated, alike in its great and its little concerns, by a perfect conformity to the Divine nature.

Conduct is perfect when the motive of action can be translated into the principle: Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. In putting this principle in

practice it will take a form, embracing in its connotation conflict, submission and self-sacrifice: *Not my will but Thine be done.* Fidelity to the moral ideal can only be obtained by a continual repression of the tendencies which seek goods and satisfactions incompatible with the moral good. Self-sacrifice is the indispensable condition of duty; and self-sacrifice is not the preference of one kind of satisfaction over something less gratifying, but the subordination of the desires of self to the superior law which, as identified with Supreme Goodness and Love, calls for reverential obedience. God is the rule, the judge, and the recompense of duty. For, duty fulfilled, conformity to the Will of God realized in life leads inevitably to union with Him, in the perfect possession, by intellect and will, of the Supreme Good, which confers happiness, perfect in kind, and endless in duration.

The Gospel does not place the soul in that impossible position to which Kant would confine it, by forbidding it, under pain of forfeiture, to look to the happiness which its nature craves. We are ordered to love God for Himself; but we are not forbidden to remember, too, that in Him virtue will find its reward. The Author of the physical, the moral, and the supernatural order teaches us by revelation and reason, that the hope of attainment may lawfully become a secondary motive to sustain the will against the solicitations of apparent goods that would draw it from the path of duty: Seek first the kingdom of God, for what will it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul.

In the Christian conception of the relation of man to God, is involved the highest notion of human dignity. Participating by Grace in the Divine Existence, in a measure surpassing the tendencies and capacities which it has in the order of creation, the human personality in itself, and its developed activities which make up the sum of life, has a value before which the rest of the Cosmos

sinks into insignificance. The pettiness of our planet, when contrasted with the immensities of the worlds which astronomy brings to our knowledge, affords Positivists a text from which to expound the meanness of human existence. This view would be perfectly correct if there were nothing in man but what is evolved from matter, and if the moral law could be stated in terms of the redistribution of matter and motion. But mass or physical force is not an element in the calculation of moral values. The least important action of the free, intelligent agent, because a copy approaching immeasurably nearer than any physical force to the Divine Exemplar, is incomparably nobler than the sum of all material energies. Man's dignity as a rational being is increased and intensified by his participation in the Divine principle of Grace. The full measure of his value is found in estimating the meaning of his redemption by the Son of God. Viewed in the light of Christian dogma, humanity is clad in the reflected glory and excellence of the Divinity itself. Life becomes a sacred trust; its importance is to be estimated, not by the amount of happiness to be extracted out of it, but from the Supreme End to which it leads. Sacred in our own persons, sacred in others, sacred in its mysterious sources, no less than when it has developed into maturity, it is to be respected as a loan belonging to the Creator, to be employed in perfect accordance with the purpose for which it has been extended.

Christianity alone, taking its stand on the destiny of man, has preached the great truth of human equality and universal brotherhood. Every person, man or woman, bond or free, is on the same basis of essential equality. Antecedent to all social organization and human enactment, from the nature of their relations to God, all have an inalienable right to whatever means are necessary to develop their faculties, and seek the perfection consistent with their dignity as children of a common Father, and

brothers in Jesus Christ. Equality of rights is synonymous with equality of duty. But, as an illustrious Christian orator has said :—" Right is the selfish side of (man's) relations, while duty is the generous and devoted side of them ; and this is why there is as much difference as between heaven and earth, between devotedness and selfishness, between constituting a society upon duty and constituting it upon right. Therefore the Gospel which was the naturalization of charity was not a declaration of the rights of man, but a declaration of his duties." [1]

Love of God is the first and fundamental obligation of man as a religious and a moral being. Love, again, is the inspiration of his relations to his fellow-beings. The second commandment follows as a corollary of the first : Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Respect the dignity of human nature in others, as in thyself, not because it is, as the Kantian formula, contradicting the notion of absolute and contingent, would have us believe, an end in itself, but because it has for end and crown, union with Infinite Goodness. This is the principle, *de jure* and *de facto*, of the altruism which is sometimes claimed as the exclusive product of modern culture. Before the coming of Christ, humanity, as a bond of union, was unknown. Bereft of any accidental claim of citizenship, or power, the human animal was but a chattel to be sold or exploited for a master's benefit, or a dangerous creature to be destroyed. But the brotherhood of the race was promulgated in the announcement of Christ :—Behold I give you a new commandment, that ye love one another ; and by this men shall know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. By the proclamation of that commandment the sentence of human slavery was pronounced ; henceforth there was neither bond nor free, neither Jew nor Greek, neither barbarian nor Scythian, but all brothers in Jesus Christ.

[1] Lacordaire : Conférences de Notre Dame. Conf. 32ième.

Whilst establishing the essential equality of all, Christian charity mitigates the hardships attendant on the accidental inequalities which are inseparable from human life. The unequal measure in which nature distributes the gifts of mind and body, physical health and strength, intellectual capacity, force of will, and the moral virtues which fashion conduct, entails inevitably an inequality of condition among men. This inequality must be further aggravated by the establishment of those general laws and conventions indispensable to social existence. In the decline of vigor by sickness and old age, in the untimely privation of parental care for the helpless young, there are prolific sources of poverty, misery and suffering. Even the most radical socialistic schemes would establish, not a perfect equality, but a gradation of society according to the merits of each individual. The principles of Christian charity alone furnish an effective means of protecting the poor and the suffering against the harsh consequences of this inevitable inequality. It reminds those who are possessed of superfluous goods, that these belong not to them, but to the Creator, who has entrusted them into the hands of stewards whose duty it is to minister to the wants of the needy. The duties of beneficence are consecrated, not by appealing to some prospective amelioration of society, but by putting them on a level with the purest love and service of God: As long as ye did it to one of these, my least brethren, ye did it unto me.

The ethical services which Christianity has rendered to human society may be estimated by what it has done for elevating the condition of woman. Reason and natural love conspire to teach that the conjugal life should be a union of hearts and minds, carrying with it a reciprocal exchange of rights, of dignity, of love and respect. Such an exchange implies that the union should be of one with one, indissoluble except by death. These characters of the union, demanded in the name of justice on behalf of

the wife, are still more imperatively required to safeguard the rights of the child, and insure to its weakness the natural succor of paternal care, as well as a mother's affectionate ministration and guidance. But, ignorant of his dignity, man allowed love to degenerate into sensuality. Woman, instead of being treated as a respected helpmate, became a slave or a toy, valued as long as she pleased her master, as a means of animal gratification; and when age, sickness, or the natural inconstancy of the human heart had deprived her of her power of fascination, she might be turned out of doors, or relegated to ignominious contempt. Degraded from her high estate, deprived of her rightful honors, she who, in the divine plan, was meant to be the incarnation of the gentler virtues, the concrete expression of loving self-devotedness, to shed around the hearth the purity of morals and the sanctity of religion, became a potent factor in aggravating the evils to which she had first been a victim.

Christianity restored to woman her rights and dignity. It recognized her essential equality with man. It indicated the indissolubility and unity of the marriage tie, imparted to it the highest consecration of religion, and made the wedded life an external sign of the sacramental Grace of Jesus Christ. By establishing the just claims of the wife, and by teaching men to bow reverentially to virgin purity, the Gospel gave back their true place to sister and mother, and this reinstatement of woman to her rightful place is universally admitted to have been one of the most far reaching influences for the purification of morals. The author of a recent work, *Morality as a Religion*,[1] who would condemn dogma as pernicious or useless, makes some remarks on the subject of marriage, implying that it did not require Christianity to teach us that marriage ought to be indissoluble. As we have already said, the moral necessity of this indissolubility is a truth of

[1] Morality as a Religion: W. R. Washington Sullivan, London, 1898.

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natural reason. But, like many others, it was not generally grasped by reason, nor made a practical guide until it was clearly demonstrated and enforced by Jesus Christ and his Church. Centuries elapsed before the persistent influence of the Church succeeded in forcing upon civil legislation the principle of the indissolubility of marriage; and only her stern, uncompromising opposition to divorce has sustained the principle till our own age, despite the often renewed assaults of the temporal power. Wherever her influence ceased to be paramount, among the first heralds of the change the malignant demon of divorce reappeared to blast with his baleful influence the ideal of the Christian home. "Even amonst ourselves," said Lacordaire, describing the condition of another nation, in words that apply in their full force to our own, "what do we hear as soon as the evangelical waters lower a little? The hollow cry of divorce, the human animal who yells after brutal liberty, and asks to be set free from a duty which is insufferable to his desires. We have heard this shameful cry—it has triumphed in our country. There a wife, a Christian wife, sees herself driven from the family which she has founded with her blood; she ceases to be a mother on ceasing to be a wife; they take away from her, by a divorce, as a herd of cattle is divided, a part of the children whom she bore in her womb, whom she nourished with her tears and her love."

Christianity alone has raised woman to the position which she occupies in the civilization which has been created by the Gospel. The Catholic Church alone maintains the principle which is the first bulwark of woman's dignity, the indissolubility of the sacramental union between husband and wife; and the rapidity with which the cancer of divorce is spreading in modern society proclaims very plainly that, where the influence of the Church does not prevail, marriage is rapidly ceasing to be anything but a civil contract. Human nature is radically

unchanged; similar causes will bring forth similar results; what effects will follow for society, when marriage, divested of its religious sanctity, is degraded to the condition of a mere civil engagement, is written for our instruction and warning in the annals of the Roman Empire.

The opinion that it did not need Christianity to teach the true character of marriage betrays a total incapacity for dealing with the facts of history. The laws of centrifugal and centripetal force, the geographic position of the Western World, are known to every child in the primary grade. These truths were the same a thousand years ago as they are to-day. But it required the genius of Columbus and Newton to bring them to the knowledge of humanity. A truth once demonstrated becomes a truth known for all time, and takes its place as part of the common knowledge shared by persons who would never have reached it by their own unaided efforts. If Mr. W. R. Washington Sullivan is so sure that marriage ought to be indissoluble, his conviction, like the entire code of Christian Ethics, which independent morality appropriates, is a heritage derived from the religion which he discards as obsolete and effete.

Political authority, the necessary bond of national existence, is ennobled by the ethics of the Gospel; and at the same time individual liberty is admirably safeguarded. In his Encyclical on Human Liberty, Leo XIII. has expressed, in a few lines, the entire doctrine on this subject. "It is an absolutely certain duty to respect authority and obey just laws; thus the citizen finds in the efficacy and vigilance of the law, aid and protection against the violence of the wicked. Legitimate authority derives from God, and he who resists this authority, resists the order by God established. Thus obedience is admirably ennobled; because it is rendered to the most just and most exalted of authorities. But if a command emanates from

one who has no right to issue it, or if it is contrary to reason, to the eternal law, to the will of God, then duty calls on us to obey God rather than man. Thus the way is barred to tyranny, the usurpation of power by government is prevented; the rights of citizens, of families, of all parts of the nation are safeguarded, and true liberty, which consists, as we have said, in the power to obey law and right reason, becomes the patrimony of all."

The perfect conception of the moral and religious ideal means the conscious realization, in conduct, of a complete correspondence with the Divine plan of the universe, producing in the rational agent a faithful, though finite, and, consequently, essentially imperfect reflection of Divine Perfection. From the mysterious and forever unfathomable depths of God's Infinity emanates the law of righteousness. The order of the Universe is its transitory shadow, projected on the background of eternity; it is reflected in human consciousness; its text rendered more legible, and its import more clearly defined, by the light of revelation. But not alone in copy and in shadow is the law of Eternal Righteousness manifested for our guidance. It comes before us in substantial form, under which it seizes on our intellect with the irresistible force of evidence, and appeals, with supreme intensity, to our heart. In Jesus we have the incarnate affirmation of the Eternal Law; in this, its perfect manifestation, besides making our knowledge complete, it supplies a means which our moral nature cannot dispense with. Imitation is one of the fundamental impulses of our nature. To produce a work we require a model either real or imaginary; and the efficacy of a figment of the imagination would be of comparatively little help to us, in the arduous task of realizing in our character the moral good. To achieve perfection, we need an ideal concretely placed before us. He is the perfect realization of Divine Holiness; He is the moral Truth in all its substantial splendor,

present to our mental vision. He is the Supreme Good, at once appealing to our impulse of imitation, and co-ordinating to our pursuit of perfection all the emotions of our nature, sympathy with our kind, admiration for the beautiful, the heroic, the tender, reverence for majesty, and love of the good.

In the record of his earthly career we have the Divine Will expressed concretely in terms of human life, encouraging our frailty to start and persevere in the path along which we may make continual progress towards Infinite Holiness, without reaching even the edge of the abyss which divides finite imperfection from the incomprehensible essence of God.

PART IV.—CRITICAL.

CHAPTER I.

KANT.

THE determinant of morality must be found in either the subjective or the objective side. Independent moralists have sought in both directions a solution of the ethical problem. Kant endeavored to establish morality on the theory of the autonomy of the will. Rejecting as non-moral or immoral all determination derived from the end, he finds in the reverence of the will for duty the only source of moral value. We shall expose the fundamental principles of the system as it is formulated chiefly in the Critique of Practical Reason.

All practical principles are propositions, including a general determination of the will, to which determination are subordinated many practical rules. These principles are subjective when considered by the subject as valid only for his own will. In this respect they are maxims. If considered objectively, or as valid for every reasonable being, then they furnish practical laws.[1] All rules determining the will are imperative, expressing an *ought* (ein sollen) or an objective necessity of the action, and signify that if reason determined completely the will, the action would infallibly take place according to this rule. The imperative, then, has an objective value, whilst the maxim is subjective. An imperative may determine the will in one of two ways: it may determine the will, considered

[1] Critique of the Practical Reason, Chap. I., Sec. I.

as will, without any reference to the will's ability to realize it or not; or it may determine the will with reference to the realization of some end or purpose. If it be of the latter kind, then the imperative is hypothetical; I must act so if I desire to realize such or such an end. All these hypothetical imperatives, then, are dependent for their validity on the assumed existence of some desire on the part of the subject. Now all desire is merely *subjective*, and cannot be supposed as belonging to all minds, but only to the individual; hence no such imperative can be a *practical law*, or law for the rational will simply considered as a rational will.

Hence the first theorem which Kant lays down is that all practical principles which suppose an object of desire, as a determinant of the will, are empirical and cannot furnish a practical law, that is a universal principle of action.[1] In explanation of the theorem Kant shows that all determinants of free choice arising from any object are the result of the representation in sensibility of a pleasure to be derived from that object. Such representation is necessarily subjective and empirical, therefore incapable of being made a general law for all wills. All such determinations he reduces to one general principle of self-love or personal happiness;[2] and inasmuch as they are merely empirical and dependent on the subjective personal appreciation of the individual, they are outside the domain of morality. Here Kant concisely lays down a principle fatal to hedonistic Ethics of every shade. Happiness is subjective, personal, individual; it cannot be generalized and proposed as binding on all wills. The principle of happiness as a determinant of the will is only subjectively valid, without any *a priori* necessity. If we take personal happiness as the determinant of the will, we obtain not morality, but something quite opposed to it.[3] Kant shows by illustrations from practical life that the pursuit of hap-

[1] Sec. II., Th. 1. [2] Sec. III., Th. 2. [3] Th. IV., Sch. 2.

piness is very different from morality. We should place very little confidence in the integrity of a man whose only recommendation would be that he invariably regulated his conduct with a view to obtain all the pleasure and happiness that he could attain. If any one after telling us how, for his own advantage, he had, with all possible prudence, successfully accomplished a profitable piece of deceit, and would assure us this act was the accomplishment of duty, we should look upon him as a fool or a villain. The path of duty according to the principle of the autonomy of the will is clear to the least enlightened mind. But if any principle of happiness be proposed as the rule of conduct, then our knowledge of duty postulates a widely extended knowledge of life, and the consequences of action. The exclusion, then, of all objective principles of determination or all material content leaves us to account for moral determination, from the formal element alone. If the representation of the object cannot be the moral determinant, there remains but the form of the law itself, "If from a law we abstract all matter, that is, every object of the will, there remains but the simple form of a universal legislation." [1]

Having thus reached the conclusion that the form itself of the universal law can alone be the moral determinant, Kant proposes two problems: Given that the legislative form is the sole sufficient principle of determination, what is the nature of the will which can thus be determined? [2] Since the simple legislative form of the universal legislation can only be represented by reason, and is therefore neither an object of sense, nor of the world of phenomena, this representation of the law of reason is different from all the natural events happening in virtue of the causal nexus which determines all things necessarily in the world of phenomena. The determination of the will by reason's representation of the law, is independent of any causality

[1] Sec. IV., Th. 3. [2] Sec. V., Prob. 1,

external to itself, and this independence we call liberty. A will therefore for which the simple legislative form can alone serve as a determinant is free.

The second problem is the converse of the former: Granted that a will is free, to find the law which is capable of determining it necessarily.[1] The solution is evident. If a will is free, it must be independent of all determination by empirical conditions; nevertheless it must be capable of determination to act. Since the empirical or objective element, or the matter of the law is excluded, there remains available no principle of determination except the legislative form. Liberty, then, and the practical unconditioned legislative form, mutually imply each other. Which of the two, liberty and the practical law, is anterior in consciousness? It is the law itself, for liberty being primarily a negative concept cannot be perceived immediately, nor can it be derived from phenomena in which a determination exists. The consciousness of the moral law arises in us by observing the necessity with which reason imposes it, irrespective of all empirical conditions. Perceiving the command imposed as a necessity, the individual concludes to the possibility of obeying it,—I ought, therefore I can. Practical reason, then, is the universal legislator imposing the moral law under a form universally valid for all wills. Its fundamental form is expressed as follows: Act in such a way that in willing to act you can will that the maxim of your act should become a universal law.[2] Analyzing our own judgments, Kant proceeds to show, concerning the conformity of act to law, whatever may be our inclinations and desires, reason compares the maxims which determine the will with practical reason as determining itself *a priori*, that is, as a universal principle of legislation, for all reasonable beings. But the human will is liable to be determined by other maxims or motives than the universal moral law.

[1] Sec. VI., Prob. 2. [2] Sec. VII.

For it, then, the law becomes an imperative, commanding categorically. The relation of the human will to this law is one of dependence, which, under the name of obligation, expresses a compulsion (Nothigung) imposed by reason, for the accomplishment of an act called duty. The essence of morality we see to consist in the determination of the will by itself as practical reason: "The autonomy of the will is the unique principle of all moral laws and duties." [1] The sentiment inspired by the moral law can be only that of respect. This sentiment is the only one which does not spring from self-love; it has its seat in reason; and as we have seen that any maxim reducible to self-love is excluded from morality, so obedience performed from any other motive than respect is wanting in morality. An action, therefore, may be materially conformable to the moral law; but because it springs from some motive other than respect for the law, it possesses only a character of legality, not one of morality.[2] The unique end or moral action is therefore the will *as autonomous*, without reference to any ulterior end. The will is an ultimate end in itself.

Although Kant maintains that, accepting the principle of the autonomy of the will, the path of duty is clear to every mind, however unenlightened, he takes the trouble of giving to the general universal law already formulated some other expressions intended to facilitate its application to conduct. The primary principle and sum total of all moral precepts is, "Act in such a way that, in willing to act, you can will that the maxim of your act should become a universal law." To judge of the morality of an act we must consider what would be the result if everybody accomplished it. If the result of its universal accomplishment would be an absurdity, then such an action is contrary to the law. I cannot, reasonably, in performing such an action, will that my motive should be univer-

[1] Th. IV. [2] Ch. III.

sally acted upon. Suicide, for example, or making a promise with the intention of breaking it, is an action of the kind. To facilitate the application of this principle Kant gives it another form which is fundamentally the same: "Act in such a way as to treat humanity, whether in yourself or in the person of another, as an end in itself, and never as a means." If the will is, in my own person, an end in itself, and my will identified with reason constitutes my personality or humanity, I cannot make my humanity subservient to any other end or object of desire. To use it thus would be employing it as an instrument of pleasure; and all action of this kind is destitute of morality. As we recognize other human beings to be of the same nature as ourselves, the universal law applies equally to them as to us, and we must therefore treat all rational creatures as ends in themselves. If, for example, I lie, for a purpose, I make use of my faculties to procure myself some advantage; I employ myself, my humanity, as a means to an end. I act immorally. If I make use of others for a purpose which prevents them from acting in conformity with the universal law commanding them to act as if they were ends in themselves, I am making use of humanity as if it were a means to an end, and thus violating the command of the universal law. By the application of these principles to practice we can determine the rules of conduct embraced in a moral law.

Having established the principle of morality as independent and exclusive of all pursuit of happiness, Kant shows that the distinction between the principle of morality and that of happiness is not one of opposition that would forbid man to seek his good or happiness. Sometimes it becomes man's duty to seek his welfare. But what is of primary importance is to mark that the question of duty is to be determined without reference to happiness; duty for duty's sake, not duty as a means to happiness.

In the Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason, Kant exam-

ines how the concept of the sovereign good involves the moral law as a supreme condition. The moral good or virtue is the chief good; but it is not the total good which rational finite beings desire. The total good or sovereign good must also, besides the good of virtue, contain the good which satisfies man's desire of happiness. It involves, therefore, as an object, the combination of perfect goodness with perfect happiness; the former being the condition to which the latter is attached.[1] We are bound by the moral law to pursue the chief good as far as it is the moral good. If we are commanded by reason to pursue it, its attainment must be a possibility for us. There is, therefore, a sovereign good which must complete at the same time our desire and capacity for happiness. The order of duty, then, and the order of happiness, which in our world of phenomena are united by no necessity, which in fact frequently do not correspond (for duty is oftener painful than pleasant), must be united in the sovereign good. This identification of both Kant shows to involve two postulates, the immortality of the soul and the existence of God. We must postulate the existence of a being distinct from nature, and at the same time the cause of nature, who contains in himself the grounds of the realization of happiness combined with goodness. Such a being must be possessed of will, intelligence and omnipotence, that is, must be God. The impossibility of realizing in life the ideal of perfect holiness and happiness leads us to the belief in the future life.[2]

The system of Kant agrees with ours in many essentials. It is not atheistical, for it involves the postulate of God's existence, as well as the immortality of the soul. It condemns all attempt at constituting the moral order on hedonistic principles; it shows reason as conscience to be the immediate source and authoritative rule of moral obligation; it recognizes the order of duty as primary and

[1] Chap. II. [2] Bk. II., Chap. II., Sec. 4.

distinct from the order of happiness. The point on which Kant's system radically differs is the fundamental postulate of the entire theory—the autonomy of the will. This is the characteristic feature of his entire doctrine, which is thereby rendered, notwithstanding the admission of God's existence, a system of independent morality. Instead of being the indispensable underlying truth giving the basis of a distinction between right and wrong, and conferring its authority on moral obligation, the existence of God comes in as an afterthought, to add a touch of symmetry and harmony to the original plan. God, instead of being the sanction and source of morality, appears at the end, to play the rôle of the magnate who distributes the prizes for good conduct at the Sunday school. But as the pupils were strictly forbidden, under penalty of forfeiting their chances, to work for the prize, his influence on the behavior of the school is reduced to nothing.

The fabric covers the whole moral ground ; it seems to be bound together in the bonds of irresistible logic ; and there is no element necessary for a solid edifice wanting. On closer inspection, however, there are a great many flaws in the logical nexus, and the due relationship of the elements is so inverted that we have the foundation imposed as a roof; and what should be the keystone of the main arch is but an ornamental projection, which, according to many, only mars the symmetry of the structure.

Space forbids us entering into the details of the system to bring out the various inconsistencies in which Kant involves himself as he fits all the facts of the moral life into his abstract formal law. The radical defects, however, of his position and the suicidal character of his chief principles may be briefly pointed out.

Kant justifies himself for falling back exclusively on the formal principle for the construction of a science of morals, on the ground that only in the formal element

can any determinant be found having the universality requisite for validity. The morality of action, he holds, must be derived either from the formal or material element. This is quite true. There are no other principles to which we may apply. An act derives its goodness either from the formal good intention of the agent, or from the end to which it is directed. If the end of the action or the material content is excluded from being a determinant of the moral value, then all this value must derive from the formal good will. The next step is to show that the material principle, that is, the object or end to be attained by the act, is excluded from being the determinant of morality. Kant proceeds to bring out this conclusion: all action aiming at any end is necessarily the outcome of a desire for individual personal satisfaction, or, to use a generic term which sums up the objects of all desires, happiness. Now all desire springs from sensibility; all pleasure or happiness is but an empirical personal experience; my happiness cannot possibly be yours, nor yours mine—it is a matter of personal appreciation. How then from it can be drawn any principle of universal, absolute validity? Kant rightly concludes that happiness as the determinant of moral value is an absurdity. Here Kant, as we have already remarked, deals a blow which strikes at the root of all hedonistic solutions of morals. But before he reaches his point, he falls into the radical error of the hedonist; he assumes that all object of desire is pleasure or happiness; and having excluded happiness as a determinant, he assumes that he has shown the unfitness of any object of desire or will to be a source of moral value. With him the conception of the good is identical with the conception of happiness. This fallacy has been already exposed. The good is distinct from happiness; it is, besides, the proper object of every faculty, for in every faculty there is a tendency to some proper end, the acquisition of which completes its

nature, and brings to the tendency that satisfaction which as a subjective state we call pleasure or happiness. The conception of the object of desire and of the tendency of the faculty too is necessarily antecedent to that of pleasure or pain. Pleasure is the gratification experienced by the faculty on reaching the object to which it has a natural tendency; pain is the condition in which the faculty finds itself when it cannot reach the object. Without the object and the tendency we cannot conceive either pleasure or pain as existing. Not happiness, then, but the good is the connatural object of all tendency and desire. Kant's argument excludes only happiness from being a possible determinant of morality; the real objective determinant, the good, has not been reached by it. Hence Kant's conclusion that only in the formal determination of conscience can we find the source of moral value is illogical, not to say false.

But, although Kant has failed to show any necessity for recurring to the formal principle exclusively for the construction of a science of morals, perhaps he has been able to build one upon it, and thereby succeeded in demonstrating that, even if it be not necessarily the sole solution, it is at least one valid resolution of the ethical problem. His attempt has not met with even that limited success. His radical, characteristic tenet, which gives its individuality to the whole system, is the autonomy of the will. It is the compendium of the entire doctrine of the Pure Practical Reason; everything else is but a postulate or a consequence of this pivotal principle Morality is possible because the will can determine itself from the representation of a law; this possibility reveals the existence of liberty: conduct is good when it is the outcome of the autonomous determination of the will; determination of the will from any outside cause is heteronomy, in which morality cannot exist. Now if this all-important principle involves a contradiction, the ground

on which Kant's whole fabric rests disappears; and in Kant's application of the principle, this contradiction is manifest.

The categorical imperative, "Act in such a way that, in willing to act, you can will that the maxim of your act should become a universal law," is an abstract, general conception empty of any content, and becoming a law of conduct only when it is actually formulated as bearing on some particular act. Conduct is not an abstraction: it is made up of a series of acts, every one of which is a part of conduct, and all of which form the moral life. The categorical imperative can come into reality only as the law of this, that, or the other action, the realization of which presents itself to consciousness. The imperative as the motive of action, and not a philosophical abstraction, is: "Act in these particular circumstances in such a way," etc. How is reason to determine what must be the character of an action that the maxim or motive prompting it is suitable for being made a universal law? The action must be such that its universal performance would involve no absurdity. How are we to determine whether the conception of the universal performance of an action involves, or does not involve, an absurdity? We must examine the nature of the action in its results. If, for example, I consider the question of disposing of my life, "it is determined as soon as I ask myself how it should be, in order that a nature of which it (the maxim of my conduct) would be the law, could subsist. It is clear that nobody could in such a nature arbitrarily put an end to his life, for such an arrangement would not be a durable order of things." I cannot then commit suicide, because, considering the nature of the act and its results, it is incompatible with the order of things. Similarly, to use another example of Kant, I may not give false testimony, because, examining the results of the act, if it were universal, it would be subversive of the universal order. In

these and every other example with which Kant illustrates the application of his universal, formal law, the possibility of accepting as a universal law the maxim of the contemplated action is settled by examining the bearing of the action on the constituted order of nature in the universe. The will, then, determines itself by the representation of a law. But what can or what cannot be represented by the pure practical reason as a universal law is predetermined in the nature of things, or the order of the Universe. The specification, therefore, of action into moral and immoral rests not with the will, but is expressed in the constituted universal order of creation. The autonomous, self-legislative will, which, in order that morality may exist at all, must determine itself independent of all external reference, is, when Kant comes out of the world of metaphysical abstractions, and undertakes to show a rule of concrete conduct, obliged to conform its action to a fixed determined law over which it has not control. A will that is self-legislative and independent, yet finds its judgments defined by another legislation, is autonomous and heteronomous; it is absolutely independent, yet entirely subject; it imposes its own law and may obey no other, yet in formulating its law it is under the necessity of strictly conforming to a universal law of nature. Here are contradictions in abundance which vitiate the essential tenets of Kant's doctrine. Following Schopenhauer, many of Kant's critics have urged this argument further. They accuse him of so far forgetting his principles as to make utility the ultimate standard of values. Sometimes he seems to fall into this inconsistency; but his idea is to judge the action not by the utility of its results, but by the absurdity or non-absurdity attendant upon the assumption of these results as universally prevailing.[1]

Besides this original sin against logical thought, many other objections might be urged against Kant. All ac-

[1] See Cresson: La Morale de Kant, pp. 101 ff.

tion he shows to belong to the world of phenomena; in the world of phenomena, according to his metaphysical system, owing to the reign of the law of causality, every occurrence is controlled by the most rigid determination. The freedom of the will can exist only, Kant holds, in the world of *noumena*. This separation of the act and the freedom necessary to constitute it a moral act at all, and the relegation of these two acts into separate worlds, leave room for a well-grounded doubt as to whether the individual, in the performance of any action which as a phenomenon is predetermined, is really a moral agent at all. If we had no better reason for holding to the freedom of the will than the one afforded by Kant's metaphysics, we might, without any violence to reason, join the camp of determinism.

The genesis which Kant assigns to obligation is the consciousness of a law imposed by the free spirit on itself. From this we can have but an incomplete, imperfect form of obligation. The mind does not impose a law of its own; it applies a law which it recognizes as existent. Consciousness tells us that when we judge an act to be wrong, the restriction of obligation announces itself as something independent of our volition. The mind may be unwilling to submit to the law, but is nevertheless under the necessity of acknowledging the law to exist. The will may be averse to obeying the restriction, it may actually disregard the law, but despite this opposition of the will, reason declares the violated law as valid and binding on the will, which refuses to impose it on itself. If Kant were correct, any violation of the moral law would consist in the mind willing the law, and willing to disobey it, that is to say, willing two contradictory things at the same time. The sole motive for obedience to the law, Kant says, is the reverence of the will for its own autonomous decision. Reverence, however, is founded on a recognition of superior worth, dignity, goodness; it essentially implies a relation-

ship of inferiority and superiority. We experience a reverence for the moral law, but if we conceive the law merely as the will itself determining itself after a universal representation, it is impossible to account for any sentiment of reverence. If the law inspires the mind with reverence, it must be acknowledged by the mind as something coming with a superior authority, invested with a dignity which calls for obedience, and, instead of being a mere product of the mind itself, derives from some independent source, its claims to respect.

Again, it is impossible to reconcile the principle that the will is an end in itself, and that reason must look upon each member of humanity as an end in himself, with the postulate of the existence of a Supreme, Intelligent Creator of the Universe. Intelligent creation necessarily implies that all creatures are ordained to an end outside themselves. Reason must therefore either recognize that man, as a creature, is destined to some end, or deny that there is any universal plan or purpose in the Universe, a denial which extinguishes the notion of a First Cause acting with Intelligence. In Kant's philosophy, indeed, he reaches the truth of God's existence only by taking as a starting-point the autonomy of the will, as the indispensable principle of morality, and proceeding step by step, through the connected implications, till he reaches the truth of God's existence. For Kant to test the first principle of his theory by examining it in the light of a truth which is reached only in virtue of the validity of that principle would be absurd. But, from an outside point of view, the system presents itself as combining two irreconcilable tenets.

And to what an unpractical situation does Kant reduce his moral man, from the religious point of view! All actions performed with a view to gaining a recompense are thereby deprived of all value, and claim to the reward of virtue. Yet he admits that we may legitimately hope that

in the sovereign good we shall find the happiness towards which by our nature we aspire. We may, therefore, hope; yet we must not hope under penalty of cutting away all grounds of hope. As Cresson puts it: "Il est legitime d'espérer; mais si, par malheur, on fait le necessaire pour se procurer ce qu'on espère; on n'aura pas ce qu'on espère; si, au contraire, tout en espérant, on fait ce qui est necessaire pour se procurer ce qu'on espère, sans le faire parce qu'on l'espère, on aura ce qu'on espère."[1] Under such conditions virtue is beyond the abilities of human nature; and Kant might well say as he did that it is doubtful if any truly moral action has ever been performed by man.

The theory of right is a corollary of the theory of obligation; and where the principle of duty fails to establish obligation, there can be assigned no satisfactory origin of human rights. "Act, exteriorly, in such a way that the free use of your will may be consistent with the external liberty of every one," is Kant's principle for the basis of right, public and private. Its validity is derived from the formula of the moral law. It is the foundation of right because all the precepts which derive from it may be enforced by external coercion. It is from the possibility of such constraint that the notion of right is derived.

There are, therefore, two principles which, according to Kant, account for the genesis of right: respect for the liberty of others, and the possibility of coercion to enforce this respect; and the latter of the two is the sole source of authority for the former. This explanation implies, without accounting for, the existence of rights. I am obliged to respect your liberty, otherwise there is no right. Whence arises your claim to have your liberty respected by me? It cannot depend upon the possibility of such restriction on my liberty being enforced by external coer-

[1] La Morale de Kant, p. 120.

cion; for it must already exist, and the power of coercion is a consequence, not a constituent, of your claim upon me to have your liberty respected. If yours and mine come into conflict, there must be some principle in virtue of which mine ought to give way; and from this principle arises the moral power which I have to coerce your obedience. But instead of establishing any principle imposing on my will the obligation of respecting your liberty, Kant appeals to the possibility of coercion which implies the existence of this source of right.

Kant endeavored to place duty on an impregnable basis, relying neither on speculative science, nor on religion, for its value and supreme importance. To do so he placed the source and determinant of all morality in the free will of man, independent of all relationship; that is, without reference to any superior will, or to the proper object of action. His attempt is the best that ever has been made, probably the best that ever can be made to establish ethical truth on a purely formal basis. Instead of reaching a satisfactory logical system, he entangles himself in a mass of fatal contradictions. The theory, however, has its use, for it stands among the products of human speculation as a warning that any attempt to derive the distinction of good and evil, and the force of moral obligation, from the subjective side alone is doomed, from the nature of things, to end in failure.

To the objective side, then, we must go. The end of action is the principle determining moral value. But in approaching this factor in the moral sphere to find a ground on which to lay firmly the basic principles of a science of morals, there are two closely connected conceptions which have been adopted by different theories as the true end of action. We have already demonstrated that by starting from the truth that the good is the end of action, a science of morals is possible. But besides the good, we have also on the objective side happiness; and

from the days of Epicurus to our own, philosophers have endeavored to find the determinant of conduct and the criterion of good and bad in this conception. The failures of previous attempts has not discouraged thinkers of our own day from essaying the hopeless task, The old elements are set up anew; some slight change in the point of view, some new feature, is introduced; hedonism is once more constructed, like a house of cards.

Two closely connected forms of hedonism, those of John Stuart Mill and of Herbert Spencer, represent the best efforts of modern positivism, to construct Ethics on an independent basis, and thus justify the divorce of morality and religion. The utilitarianism of Mill is generally discredited to-day; yet, as it is thought out on hedonistic lines, without the introduction of any principle drawn from outside sources, it is a more legitimate representative than is Spencer's of all the philosophies which have sought in man's necessary pursuit of happiness the basis of the moral order. Spencer's doctrine claims attention as an authoritative representative of agnostic thought in the world of morals.

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CHAPTER II.

MILL

THE complete antithesis of Kantian principles is to be found in utilitarianism. For Kant, morally good action must know nothing of an end to be obtained; and as all pursuit of ends is called into play by a desire to obtain some satisfaction or interest, which is included in the generic term, happiness, all action aiming at happiness is thereby deprived of moral goodness. Utilitarianism, on the contrary, makes the principle of happiness the determinant of all moral values. Not alone is the pursuit of happiness consistent with the moral good, but the good is formally constituted by it. The principle that pleasure or happiness is the sole desirable end of endeavor is as old as the Cyrenaic school. Epicurus, insisting that a truly happy life is one guided by reason, taught that while happiness is the end of life, this happiness is constituted less by the aggregate of passing moments of gratification, than by such prudent direction of life as obtains, from all sources of experience, the maximum of agreeable feeling. From this view of life the transition to that of Hobbes is easy. This philosopher, who may be considered the father of English utilitarianism, reduced all springs of action to self-interest: not alone is self-interest always the motive of conduct, but our nature makes any other motive an impossibility. The happiness principle received its first formal expression from Paley, though he traced its validity to the will of God: "The method of coming at the will of God concerning any action, by the light of nature, is to inquire into the tendency of that action to

promote the general happiness." "Actions are to be estimated by their tendency. Whatever is expedient is right." "It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it."[1]

In the writings of Bentham, the principle that self-interest is the guide of life assumed the form of an ethical system which received the name of utilitarianism. For him, pleasure and pain are the infallible index of right and wrong. And in the comparison of results, pleasure is estimated according to quantity only. Of two courses of action, that one which yields the largest quantity of pleasure is the more virtuous. And, to help the conscience in practical life, he laid down a number of nonsensical formulæ by which we can reckon up the various items of pleasure obtained by action, in order to make a comparison of results.[2] His disciple, John Stuart Mill, seeing that it is ridiculous to speak of quantity of pleasure without recognizing a difference of quality too, improved the system by assuming that utilitarianism admits a higher and a lower in the scale of pleasures. We shall see that this principle has no room logically in the theory, and that Mill's refinement of the original postulate is a virtual abandonment of the fundamental grounds of utilitarianism. He introduced a further modification in the original doctrine by making happiness mean not alone the happiness of the individual but of "all others concerned." This feature subsequently became more prominent in the hands of the evolutionary utilitarianism, till it resulted in placing the end of conduct in the welfare of society, or the race, and in taking the moral unit to be, not the individual but society, of which the individual is but an organic part. Of utilitarianism proper, Mill is recognized as the best exponent, so that we may take his statement as representing the entire school of Hobbes, Hartley,

[1] The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, Chaps. V., VI.

[2] See Martineau: Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II., pp. 326–7.

James Mill and the two Austins. Those writers who modify the purely utilitarian doctrine with principles derived from evolutionary philosophy will find their spokesman in Herbert Spencer. In his essay entitled Utilitarianism, Mill states his theory. The following passages contain the gist of his doctrine on the fundamental problem of moral science, which is the end and criterion of conduct.

"The creed which accepts, as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pleasure and pain, and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded —namely, that pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things as desirable ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain."

"It is quite compatible with the principles of utility to recognize the fact that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that, while, in estimating all other things, quality is concerned as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone. If I am asked what I mean by difference or quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleas-

ures, if there be one to which all, or most all, who have any experience of both, give a decided preference, irrespective of any moral obligation to prefer it, that is the most desirable pleasure."

"I must again repeat what the assailants of utilitarianism have seldom the justice to acknowledge: that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agent's own happiness but that of all concerned; as between himself and others utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator."

"If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory as in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all that it is possible to require, that happiness is a good; that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness a good to the aggregate of persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality."[1]

"It has not by this alone proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that it would seem, by the same rule, necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now, it is palpable that they do desire things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue and the absence of vice, no less really than pleasure and the absence of pain. The desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact, as the desire of happiness. But does the utilitarian doctrine deny that people desire virtue, or maintain that

[1] Utilitarianism, Chap. II.

virtue is not to be desired? The very reverse. It maintains not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly for itself." [1] "This opinion is not, in the smallest degree, a departure from the happiness principle. The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate." [2]

Nothing can be more opposed to selfishness than the postulate of Mill, that utilitarianism requires a man, when weighing the conflicting claims of his own and other's enjoyments, to be strictly impartial and hold the balance with the even hand of a disinterested spectator. "The utilitarian morality," claims Mill, "does recognize in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others." This is a doctrine in which self-sacrifice is carried to the extreme. It seems to justify Mill's assertion that "in the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as you would be done by and to love your neighbor as yourself constitutes the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality." [3]

In these statements we have all the utilitarian principles clearly defined, or at least with as much clearness as they are capable of. Actions are good if they yield a surplus of pleasure; bad, if their result is a surplus of pain. This is a necessary consequence of the first principle, happiness is the end of life. And this first principle itself is based on universal experience. Each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, pursues his own happiness; for happiness, that is, pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and everything else is desirable only so far as it contributes pleasure or banishes pain. Moral conduct, then, is the conduct from which results a surplus of happiness.

But we must not make the mistake of taking happiness

[1] Utilitarianism, Chap. III. [2] Ib., Chap. IV. [3] Chap. III.

to mean the agent's happiness only. This were a misrepresentation of utilitarianism, for, then, it would be that system of utter selfishness which its assailants sometimes represent it to be. Utilitarianism gives its due place to the spirit of self-sacrifice; for the happiness which is the end of conduct is "the happiness of all concerned." Again, we are warned against the futility of objecting to utilitarianism that men do pursue other ends than happiness—virtue, for example. But utilitarianism recognizes this fact, and interprets it in a sense consistent with its own principle. Virtue is desired for itself, because it is a part of happiness. Happiness is a total made up of innumerable parts, each one of which may be pursued for itself.

These explanations and cautions are of vital importance; for if they are not understood in the interpretation of the first principle, utilitarianism is irreparably damaged. Unless the general happiness is understood to be the end, selfishness becomes the only virtue, and utilitarianism finds itself in direct antagonism with the standard of morality which has been fixed by Christianity. If those things which are pursued as ends in themselves, among which the most important for our consideration is virtue, are not shown to be pursued exclusively because they form an ingredient of happiness, then the admission that there are such ends of pursuit is fatal to the principle that happiness is the end of action. Before looking into the value of the fundamental principle itself, let us examine whether Mill can, consistently with it, hold that the end is not the happiness of the agent, but that of all concerned, and that virtue is pursued because it is a part of happiness.

The proof which the utilitarian relies upon for establishing happiness as the end of conduct is the fact that, from the constitution of our nature, we necessarily pursue what is pleasant and avoid what is painful; we cannot act otherwise. It is indisputable that all men are prompted

necessarily to seek happiness; a false interpretation of this fact gives to utilitarianism whatever plausibility it possesses. But when we say that all pursue happiness by a necessity of human nature, we must mean that each man necessarily pursues his own. Nobody would make the absurd statement that every one or any one necessarily pursues the happiness of others. In all my actions, then, I am necessarily pursuing happiness, that is, my own happiness. If I endeavor to promote the happiness of others, the end of my conduct must be my own happiness. I act as I do because in promoting the happiness of others I find my own. Whatever sacrifice I may make, however much I contribute to the good of others, when my motive is analyzed, my own happiness is the true and final end of conduct. I may give up one pleasure for another, I may resign the pleasure of eating my dinner in order to give it to a hungry man; but if I do so, it is because I shall enjoy more the pleasure of having relieved distress, than I should the satisfaction of my own appetite. The pleasure which I prefer may be more delicate, more intense, refined, perhaps more durable; but my object is my own pleasure. If I contribute to the welfare of others, I do so because I wish to gain my own satisfaction. Evidently in this view of conduct self-sacrifice is an impossibility. If I do not find my own advantage in doing good to others, I would not help them; indeed it would be impossible for me to do so, since I can act from no other motive than my own happiness. The good of all concerned, then, presents itself to me as an end on exactly the same footing as the injury of all concerned. The good or the injury of others can appeal to me only from the same formal point of view —does the promotion of it promote my own happiness? If it does, then I may pursue it; if it does not, it cannot be a motive of my conduct. But the utilitarian may say that in the promotion of the general welfare necessarily lies my own happiness, therefore if I desire my own, I

must pursue the general. This argument, however, fails to reach me, for I necessarily pursue not what is actually the most conducive to happiness, but what I judge to be so; otherwise, as virtue is the true path of happiness, immorality would be impossible. My inclinations, character and habits may be such as to lead me to look for happiness in conduct very injurious to all others concerned. But as I necessarily pursue what I believe will give me most pleasure, the result to others is a matter for their consideration, not for mine. My happiness is something personal and entirely subjective; no individual standard can be laid down which will so modify the tendencies of all individuals as to compel them to place their pleasure in what is actually the line of conduct which yields the richest results. The general happiness, to be sure, is desirable by all persons, if you like to say so. But you must mean that because each desires his own, the aggregate of shares makes up the whole, which is desired not by each person separately, but as the total of all individual ends. Twenty men who are engaged in digging a plot of ground will dig it all. But each one digs only his own part. Yet Mill, having pointed out that in this way the aggregate of persons desire the aggregate of happiness, assumes himself to have proved that each person must find the general happiness desirable. Utilitarianism, from the bearing of its primary tenet, is rendered incapable of recognizing the existence of self-sacrifice, or of meaning that happiness, which is the end of conduct, is anything but the agent's own happiness, which may or may not be compatible with the happiness of others. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number," when proposed by utilitarianism as a principle of individual conduct, is a palpable sophism.

It is not, Mill says, any contradiction of the utilitarian principle to say that virtue is an end in itself; he affirms that it is desirable and to be desired disinterestedly for

itself. Now, a little reflection shows that Mill is standing on two contradictories; he must abandon either the one or the other. Virtue, that is to say, good conduct, is desirable in itself; in a good action there is some characteristic which renders it productive of happiness for the agent; while a bad action will result in pain. There is in the good something so congenial to my nature that it gives me pleasure; I therefore find it desirable in itself. Now, what is it that constitutes this characteristic of the good? Is this constituent the fact that such an action produces pleasure or happiness? Evidently not, for pleasure is but the result of the nature of the action. If it did not possess this as yet undetermined characteristic, in virtue of which it produces pleasure, there would be no pleasure derived from it. Pleasure is a result from some kinds of actions, pain that of others. There must be, then, some opposite characteristics in the good and in the bad to account for these opposite results. The object of desire must have in it something which renders it suitable to satisfy the desire, and thereby produce the condition which we call pleasure. Food causes pleasure in the physical organism, but it is not constituted food by the pleasure which it gives. One material is of such a nature that it satisfies the appetite, whilst another is incapable of doing so. These two kinds of substance have in them an intrinsic difference of character which is the cause of the different effects which they have on the physical organism. There is an intrinsic character in a loaf of bread which is absent in a handful of sawdust, and it is the presence of this character in the one and its absence in the other, which makes the bread pleasure-giving and the sawdust the reverse. We recognize the bread to be a suitable object of desire for the physical appetite because it contains elements which make it desirable, and these elements are not produced in it, because it is "a part of happiness," but it contributes to happiness or pleasure,

because it does contain these elements. Similarly, if virtue contributes to happiness, and vice has a contrary effect, then there must be some intrinsic difference which renders one a suitable object of the moral nature, and the absence of which in the other causes it to be incapable of contributing to happiness. When we admit that moral good is desirable in itself, we admit that it contains some characteristic in virtue of which it becomes pleasure giving. What is the criterion by which we detect whether this element is present or absent in a proposed action? To answer this question we must seek some moral standard which bears upon the intrinsic nature of the action, and testifies that it contains some quality which becomes a cause of happiness. In holding that virtue or anything else is an end desirable in itself, we are driven to admit a moral criterion anterior to pleasure or pain.

Another consideration shows the fallacy of resolving the practice of virtue into a mere pursuit of happiness. Whilst other objects may be pursued exclusively for the pleasure they bring, all conscious endeavor to practise virtue merely as a means to happiness defeats itself. For it is essential to virtue that it spring from some other motive than selfishness. Nobody bears stronger testimony to this truth than Mill himself. In his *Autobiography*, he describes how the truth dawned upon him that, to pursue happiness for its own sake was a course sure to defeat its object. After passing through a protracted slough of despond, he finally realized that personal happiness is to be attained by not making it the end. "These only are happy, I thought, who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness; on the happiness of others, on the improvement of mankind, even on some art or pursuit, followed not as a means, but as an ideal end. Aiming thus at something else, they find happiness by the way."[1] Thus, his own experience

[1] Autobiography, p. 142.

taught him the error of the happiness theory. When he reached the conclusion that happiness is to be found, even in any art or pursuit followed as an ideal end, but not to be reached when sought directly as an end, the truth stood palpably before him; the good is the object of human desire. Yet, even then, so hopelessly was he enthralled by his empirical philosophy, that he did not perceive the meaning of his conclusion.

The last assumption by which Mill endeavored to bolster up the crude utilitarianism of Bentham is that pleasures differ in quality as well as in quantity. As long as we are reduced to estimating pleasure only by quantity, that is, by intensity and duration, the assignment of any general principle to determine the comparative value of various kinds of conduct is impossible. How are we, for example, to compare the quantity of pleasure derived from relieving a destitute family, with the quantity of pleasure obtained by witnessing a prize fight? Notwithstanding Bentham's rules of ready reckoning, it is nonsense to assert that such calculations are possible. But if we can reach any principle by which we can establish a hierarchy of pleasures, then there is possible some moral classification. Happiness is the end of conduct; then the action which confers a higher if not a greater happiness is more moral than that which results in a lower grade of happiness.

But Mill cannot show within the limits of utilitarianism any ground for distinguishing pleasure into higher and lower. If there are different kinds of pleasure, there must be something added to the notion of agreeable feeling to constitute this distinction. There is certainly a great difference of kind between the pleasure of listening to an elegant discourse, and that attendant upon taking a sumptuous meal, whilst both differ from that experienced by a person who would deprive himself of either of these in order to give the price of the admission ticket to a

hungry beggar. But whence is utilitarianism, which takes agreeable feeling or pleasure as the sole end of conduct, to derive any principle of distinction for these different kinds of agreeable feeling. If the difference between the good and the bad consists in the fact that one conduces to pleasure and the other does not, why is there a profound moral opposition between the conduct of Jones who derives pleasure from forgiving an injury, and that of Smith who experiences as much pleasure in obtaining revenge? The principle by which kinds of pleasure are distinguished must lie outside what is comprised in pleasure itself. To express the truth in logical phraseology, the specific difference must be something not contained in the generic notion. Mill confines himself to stating the fact that some pleasures are by everybody judged more desirable than others; but he makes no attempt to show that utilitarianism offers any basis for such distinction. But the vital question is, by means of what criterion do persons judge some pleasures to be preferable to others? Elsewhere his language betrays clearly that, theoretically a utilitarian, he, like everybody else, resorts to quite another standard than the utilitarian one to classify pleasures into higher and lower. After dwelling on the fact that pleasures obtained by the higher faculties, though the measure of happiness is less complete, are preferable to those experienced in the satisfactions of the lower appetites, he says: "And no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs." He adds: "They would not resign what they possess more than he for the complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him."[1] Happiness, therefore, is not the principle whence we determine

[1] Utilitarianism, Chap. II.

the relative value of pleasures; for this classification we must appeal to the existence of a hierarchy in our faculties. Because we deem some of these nobler and worthier than others, we rate some kinds of pleasure above others, entirely independent of the amount of happiness they represent. And in giving an account of this tendency of our mind, Mill says, "Its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or another."[1] To find a ground of distinction of pleasures with regard to quality, Mill falls back upon the existence of a scale of rank among the human faculties, and on the native tendency of the mind to approve of the conduct which is consistent with reason, regardless of how much happiness it procures. Resort to this principle for the determination of moral values is an abandonment of the first position of utilitarianism.

All the modifications made by Mill to strengthen utililtarianism are at variance with its primary principle. Its ethical standing depends entirely on the validity of its axiom; the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain is the end of conduct and the determinant of good and evil.

It is unnecessary to repeat that, as has already been shown, the end of action is not happiness. Action is the realization of a tendency in any faculty. The tendency of an activity cannot be towards a subjective state, but towards some object of a nature appropriate to satisfy the tendency. When this proper object or good is obtained, the tendency is satisfied and the faculty experiences a condition whih we call by the various names of pleasure, delight, happiness. When, on the other hand, the faculty is thwarted in the pursuit of its proper good, the resultant condition is the reverse of happiness, and is called by the generic name, pain. Happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain, demand for their existence,

[1] Utilitarianism, Chap. II.

a good which, in the nature of things, is the proper end of action.

The confusion of the relation between good and happiness vitiates all utilitarian ethics. By ignoring the objective good, and seeking in the entirely subjective element happiness, the principle of morality, the utilitarian places himself in the impossibility of finding any universal principle for the foundation of moral obligation. Mill puts the question, "Why am I bound to promote the general happiness, if my own happiness lies in something else?" And the only answer he can give is, "If the view adopted by the utilitarian philosophy of the nature of the moral sense be correct, this difficulty will always present itself, until the influences which form moral character have taken the same hold of the principle which they have taken of some of the consequences; until, by the improvement of education, the feeling of unity with our fellow-creatures shall be (what it cannot be denied that Christ intended it to be) as deeply rooted in our character, and, to our own consciousness, as completely a part of our nature, as the horror of crime is in an ordinarily well brought up young person."[1] When we ask utilitarianism for a principle of obligation, we are told that none can be assigned, now, but that there will exist one in a hypothetical stage of human development, when none will be needed. If the conduct which contributes to happiness is thereby constituted the moral good, and if I am compelled, by a necessity of my nature, always to seek happiness, all my conduct necessarily tends to the end which makes it morally good; the difference between good and evil vanishes, and moral obligation is reduced to a chimera of the imagination.

Mill points out various sanctions which come into play to induce the agent to prefer the happiness of others to his own when they come into conflict. These sanctions

[1] Utilitarianism, Chap. III.

are external or internal. The external sanctions are, "the hope of favor and fear of displeasure from our fellow-creatures, or from the Ruler of the Universe (if we believe in Him), along with whatever we may have of sympathy and affection for them; or of love and awe of Him, inclining us to do His will independent of selfish consequences." These sanctions the utilitarian may propose as motives to solicit us to a particular line of conduct. They imply prizes offered to induce me to practise some acts and abstain from others. But they cannot create any obligation. If I take into account these various consequences, and still prefer the happiness resulting from, say, robbery or murder, to the disadvantages, even though I add to all others the unfavorable results following from setting at nought the external sanctions, then utilitarianism can issue no further injunction against me.

The internal and chief sanction is, according to Mill, a feeling in our own mind; a pain, more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty. "This feeling, when disinterested, and connecting itself with the pure idea of duty, and not with some particular form of it, or with any of the merely accessory circumstances, is the essence of conscience." This sanction, then, implies that it comes into existence only dependently on an anterior recognition of moral obligation or duty; therefore it does not constitute moral obligation. Before we can feel or imagine a pain consequent on the violation of duty, we must first recognize some binding principle imposing obligation upon us—and such a principle does not exist in utilitarianism.

The origin of right is an important part of ethical inquiry. The idea must be thoroughly investigated in order to have a clear understanding of the measure of our duties towards others and of our claims upon them. In the chapter entitled *How Utilitarianism is Connected with Justice*, Mill gives us his views on the subject. After an

analysis of the various relations in which the notion of justice is found he summarizes his doctrine:

"The idea of justice supposes two things—a rule of conduct and a sentiment which sanctions the rule. The first must be supposed common to all mankind and intended for their good; the other (the sentiment) is a desire that punishment may be suffered by all those who infringe that rule. There is involved in addition the conception of some definite person who suffers by the infringement, whose rights (to use the expression appropriate to the case) are violated by it." "I have throughout treated the idea of a right residing in the injured person and violated by the injury, not as a separate element in the composition of the idea and sentiment, but as one of the forms in which the two other ideas clothe themselves. These elements are a hurt to some assignable person or persons on the one hand, and a demand for punishment on the other. An examination of our own minds will, I think, show all that these two things include, all that we mean when we speak of violation of a right. When we call anything a person's right we mean that he has a valid claim upon society to protect him in the possession of it. If he has what we consider a sufficient claim, on whatever account, to have something guaranteed to him by society, we say he has a right to it. If we have a desire to prove that anything does not belong to him, as a right, we think this is done as soon as it is admitted that society ought not to take measures for securing it to him, but should leave him to chance or his own exertions." "To have a right, then, is, I conceive, to have something which society ought to defend me in the possession of. If the objector goes on to ask why it ought, I can give him no other reason than general utility." [1]

Let us now examine the number of elements comprised in this idea of right.

[1] Op. cit., Chap. V.

1. Right is a form in which clothe themselves these two elements—a hurt to some person or persons, and a desire for punishment.

2. These two elements include all that we mean when we speak of the violation of a right.

3. When we call anything a person's right we mean that he has a valid claim upon society to protect him in the possession of it.

4. Society ought to protect him in the possession of it, for the reason of general utility.

A concrete example will expose the character of this explanation of rights: John Doe steals Richard Roe's horse; Richard has a right to the horse. How is this right constituted? First, we have a definite person injured—the owner of the horse. Second, there is a demand for punishment. These are what we mean, Mill tells us, when we speak of the violation of a right. When we speak of Roe's right to the horse we mean, too, that he has a valid claim upon society to be protected in the possession of it. Now it is clear that the two first mentioned elements suppose the existence of the valid claim in Richard Roe. If this valid claim were not vested in him the horse would not be his and there would be no injury inflicted, and consequently no demand for punishment if it were taken from him. If he has the claim society ought to protect him in the possession of it. Mr. Doe has no such valid claim to the horse. Consequently, when society, represented by the judge, will come to look into the transaction it will find that Mr. Roe, who will prove his valid claim, has been injured; that there is a demand for punishment of the enterprising utilitarian, Mr. Doe, who, unfortunately for himself, allowed his judgment to unduly magnify the amount of happiness represented by the horse. The judge will insist that the horse be restored to the person to whom it belonged—that is, to him who had the valid claim. Ulti-

mate proceedings will probably result in Mr. Doe's going to prison, where, if his mind is of an ethical turn, he may employ his leisure to investigate a point which Mill has left entirely in the dark: Whence did it arise that the other man had the valid claim, and what is the nature of the valid claim? Everything else follows from the existence of this element—the injury inflicted, the demand for punishment, the necessity that society should see that the injury be repaired, and that the thief be punished. In other words, the valid claim is the right itself, and Mill has made no attempt to explain its origin or nature. He merely shows certain consequences which flow from its existence, and that is all that he can do, for his system affords no basis of right. Start from the principle that the necessary end of conduct is agreeable feeling, with pleasure and pain as the criterion of right and wrong; then, as you will have rejected all moral obligation, so you will have left no foundation for human rights.

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CHAPTER III.

SPENCER.

THE thinker who has done so much to popularize the evolution theory of the world, has worked out a system of Ethics as the crown and glory of his philosophy. It is fortunate that the task was accomplished by him; for if it had fallen into weaker hands, there would always be a haunting feeling that the work would have been better done, and a more efficient product turned out by the master himself. But we are not disposed to feel any regrets on that hand. *The Data of Ethics* by Herbert Spencer, an integral part of the *Synthetic Philosophy*, may be considered as the official and authoritative teaching of the evolutionary school concerning morals. Some modifications and additions have been made in the new dispensation, by followers like Leslie Stephen, but they have adhered to the main lines laid down by Spencer. The purpose which the system is intended to fulfil is clearly set forth by the author in the preface to his work. Religious sanctions are fast losing their sway; great tracts of human life, to borrow a metaphor of Tyndall, are being laid bare by the recession of the theological tide. It is therefore necessary to look out for some scientific basis for morality, to supply an equivalent for the support and sanction formerly afforded to it by religion. Religion made the voice of conscience to be the faithful interpreter of the law of righteousness emanating from an all-wise, all-Holy Ruler of the Universe. But religion has been proven by science to have no legitimate connection with practical life; and having taken away from morality its

supposed source of strength, science will give it a support just as efficacious, and, at the same time, one founded in the realities of truth.

It is important that we remember this preliminary declaration of intention; because, as the explanation of morality proceeds, we shall not find anything to remind us of the end which the author proposed to himself at the beginning.

The point of departure is the Evolution Hypothesis:—all being which we know is but an outcome of evolution; that is, of the redistribution of matter and motion. Man is like all other things, a product of this process. His activities are complicated and developed activities of matter, and "if that redistribution of matter and motion constituting evolution goes on in all aggregates, its laws must be fulfilled in the most developed being as in every other thing; and his actions when decomposed into motions must exemplify its laws."[1] All moral phenomena, consequently, the judgment of conscience, the sense of obligation, the good will, are to be decomposed into their primary elements, and shown to be just as completely determined by the mechanical laws of matter as falling bodies or ascending liquids. We shall follow Spencer as closely as possible in his expositions, summarizing his statements.

Moral conduct is but a branch of vital activity; to understand it scientifically we must begin with the consideration of conduct in general, of which it is but a part. Conduct is a whole; and in a sense it is an organic whole, performed by organisms. Not all action is conduct, but only such as displays an adjustment of acts to ends.[2] Tracing this feature, adjustment of act to end, in the ascending stages of lower life, we perceive that, as organisms become more perfect, there is more adjustment of act to end. From the mollusk up to the merchant, this truth holds. With the greater elaboration of life—there goes

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 30. [2] Sec. 2.

a greater duration and breadth of life and the supreme end of all conduct is the development of life.[1]

A further aspect of these phenomena reveals to us that there is an ascending scale of such adjustments. In the lower forms we have little but adjustments which have for their results the maintenance of individual life; next, we find, along with these, adjustments for the maintaining of offspring and the race. But in imperfect forms of conduct all these adjustments have one drawback—they interfere with the adjustments of other creatures. Thus we reach by antithesis a notion of perfect conduct in which the adjustments made by one creature would nowise interfere with those of others. "That the highest form of conduct must be so distinguished is an inevitable implication; for when the form of conduct is such that adjustments of acts to ends by some necessitate new adjustments by others, there remains room for modifications which bring conduct into a form avoiding this, and so making the totality of life greater."[2]

This assumption of Spencer finds no justification in the evolutionary explanation of life. According to the theory, evolution is a progress towards perfection, carried on by that struggle for existence which results in the survival of the fittest. Evolution aims, according to the basic principles of the evolutionists, at quality, not quantity. Progress has been made by the ruthless suppression of the weaker forms by the stronger; and all matter has progressed by making stepping-stones of its dead selves to higher things. Now, here we find Spencer, as is not unusual with him, inserting into his theory a postulate which is in contradiction with it, but which he perceives to be absolutely necessary to make the theory compatible with the moral life. The substitution of the quantity of life for the quality as the aim of evolution, is a virtual admission that it is impossible to apply the doctrine of

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 4. [2] Sec. 6.

the survival of the fittest to the moral life, and that evolution does not explain morality.

Let us resume the thread of explanation. Passing from the abstract to the concrete, Spencer assumes that man is the being whose conduct is most evolved; and as man can reach the perfection of adjustment of means to ends, only in peaceful societies, the perfection of conduct can be reached only in peaceful societies. Upon what grounds Spencer assumes that man is the being whose conduct is most evolved does not appear. The perfection of conduct, we have been told, is that in which the adjustment of ends, serving individual needs and the needs of offspring, is made perfectly, without interfering with similar adjustments of others. Now these requisites of the highest conduct are found much more completely realized in bees, than in man. The defining lines of perfect conduct have not been drawn properly, if man's is recognized as the highest.

The end of conduct has been assumed to be the full development of life, not of development towards a more perfect form, by the suppression of weaker forms, as evolution requires, but towards the greatest totality of life; and in the application of this principle, totality will mean now that of the individual's, and again the totality of all lives, just as it suits the needs of Spencer's argument. The next question that arises is what is the criterion of action which discriminates between acts that lead to this end, and those that oppose it? Spencer's answer is: pleasure and pain.[1] The proof given is that the judgment which all men pass upon life, whether they be optimists or pessimists, implies that they hold life to have a value as far as the quantity of pleasure which it affords outweighs the accompanying pains. Even if we believe in a future life, and hold that pains borne here are to be compensated hereafter by pleasures, and *vice versa*, the

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 10.

implication is the same—the value of life is determined by balancing pleasure against pain. "Thus there is no escape from the admission that in calling good the conduct which subserves life, and bad the conduct which hinders or destroys it, and in so implying that life is a blessing and not a curse, we are inevitably asserting that conduct is good or bad according as its total effects are pleasurable or painful." [1]

In the two or three lines of argument in which Spencer disposes of the man who believes in future retribution there is a carefully concealed flaw. Suppose I judge this life good, because I believe that pains here below will be compensated hereafter, I will often judge an act good which does not tend to the development of life which is a redistribution of matter and motion—I will often call the conduct bad which subserves life—and my view of life implies that pleasure and pain attendant upon the functions is certainly not determinative of moral value. To prove that the estimate of life made by all men implies this standard to be true, Spencer should show that all men, those who believe in future rewards and punishments included, call good the conduct which subserves life, taking life in the sense it has with him, in the sense it has when he makes it the end of the conduct which is discriminated into good and bad, by the pleasure and pain standard.

The insufficiency of happiness as the determinant of moral value has already been shown. To take happiness as the end of action is to read awry the nature of our faculties. Besides, its subjective character depending upon personal appreciation, renders it incapable of becoming a principle on which to base any law of universal validity. I cannot tell you what you ought to consider your happiness, if happiness constitutes the good; for if you are satisfied with the happiness which you gain by your conduct, then your conduct is good, and better than

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 10.

an opposite course which you deem less satisfactory to your personal inclination and taste. We cannot, however, urge this conclusion against Spencer, because he is not endeavoring to establish any principle dictating what ought to be done,—we shall find that his Ethics is concerned only with showing what is actually done, in accordance with the laws which regulate and determine the activities of matter. The efficiency of pleasure and pain as the criterion of morality is illustrated by himself as he unfolds his views.

As the law of evolution reigns throughout the universe, and morality must necessarily be a product of matter and motion, a complete insight into the nature of moral phenomena will be had by observing conduct from the physical, the biological, the psychological and sociological point of view.

The physical view brings to our notice two characteristics of conduct in its evolution from lower to higher. Reviewing the scale of beings, we observe that, as we mount, conduct is characterized by a greater coherence of actions among themselves. The fish displays conduct in which there is no coherence between the movements of yesterday and those of to-day; higher animals, such as birds, show in the building of nests, the rearing of chicks, sets of motions in dependent series. The savage's conduct is more connected than that of lower animals; and in civilized life the connections and interdependence among the actions which make up conduct become more and more extensive. To see the truth of this remark we have but to consider the complicated network of acts and adjustments displayed in the life of the farmer, the artisan or the merchant. Now if we consider moral conduct, there is a greater coherence in what we call moral than in what we call immoral—the very terms *dissolute* and *disorderly* imply this truth.[1] Besides this coherence, regularity or

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 26.

sequence of motions becomes more marked as we ascend the scale. There is more definiteness of purpose and exactness of adjustment as conduct tends to the perfect form, till we find that the conscientious man is exact in all his transactions; he pays the exact sum at the exact time bargained for. His statements correspond with exact truth. On the other hand, immorality is characterized by excesses and defects.

Through the ascending forms of life, we find another characteristic increasing—it is the character of heterogeneity.[1] The civilized condition shows in comparison with the savage much more diversity in the sets of motions which are combined in his conduct—more varied ends are attained and harmonized. As we ascend from the immoral man to the moral man, there the same contrast is evident. "The better a man fulfils every requirement of life as regards his own body and mind, and as regards the bodies and minds of those dependent on him, and as regards the bodies and minds of his fellow-citizens, the more varied do his actions become." The man who satisfies only personal needs does not display so highly evolved conduct as the man who maintains a wife and family. The teaching of the physical view, then, is that conduct is better, higher, more moral in proportion as it displays greater coherence of actions with one another, and as it reaches a more extended sweep of adjustments to ends. It is needless to observe that we have not yet approached the question of what divides moral good from evil. To say that moral conduct is more coherent than immoral, or that it displays more numerous adjustments of acts to ends, will not satisfy the least exacting of enquirers. A professional burglar may display just as much coherence in his conduct, may regulate his time as strictly, keep his appointments as punctually as a pious, honest man. He may evince the most admirable, skill in adapting his means to the end, and

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 28.

usually does. On the other hand, a very moral person may be dull and stupid, leading a very narrow life, displaying but a meagre combination of adjustments. Yet mankind at large will judge the conduct of the one morally good, that of the other bad. Nor does the moral character of action depend upon the number of the ends to which conduct subserves. A man without children is not considered to be, on that account, less virtuous than a man with a large family. And, if virtue increased in the ratio of the increase in ends for which adjustments are made, then the father of a family would progress very considerably in the path of goodness, if he were to cohabit with a second woman, and by raising another family, double the number of ends to which adjustments should be made. He would also enter upon a larger field for the display of skill, in conducting the two sets of adjustments in such a manner that one should not clash with the other. Coherence and skill in adjustment tell of regularity, tenacity of purpose, ability of execution, shrewdness in the selection of proper means; but before anybody will think of estimating the conduct which displays those qualities, moral or immoral, he will want to know the character of the end for which all those qualities are called into play. The moral value of conduct depends upon the nature of the end to which the action is adjusted and the nature of the means employed to reach the end. The physical view of conduct has brought us no nearer the establishment of a substitute for the religious sanction. We are warned, however, in Spencer's preface, that we run the risk of doing him an injustice if we judge separately the conclusions from a particular aspect of the question, without comparing it with those drawn from correlative aspects. So we shall follow him to the biological view.

"The ideally moral man is one in whom the moving equilibrium is perfect or approaches nearest perfection." This means that the ideally moral man is one in whom the

functions of all kinds are duly fulfilled.[1] Consequently the non-fulfilment of a function in its normal proportion is the non-fulfilment of a requisite to complete life. Hence, "strange as the conclusion looks, it is, nevertheless, a conclusion to be here drawn, that the performance of every function is, in a sense, a moral obligation."[2] In what sense? we may ask. If we accept Spencer's view that the highest morality is that which contains the most possible adjustments and greatest coherence, then we may conclude that the ideally moral man, if he exists, does discharge every function in its normal proportion. But before he can logically talk about moral obligation, he must prove that moral obligation exists. He has not done so; but he steps outside the Evolution Hypothesis, and picks up the fact of moral obligation to introduce it into the principles which he has thus far evolved. Moral obligation, however, gives trouble at once, and comes into collision with the results of the biological and physical views. For "while recognizing the fact that in our state of transition, characterized by very imperfect adaptation of constitution of conditions, moral obligations of supreme kinds often necessitate conduct which is physically injurious; we must also recognize the fact, that considered apart from other effects it is immoral so to treat the body as in any way to diminish the fulness or vigor of its vitality."[3] Here is a contradiction: the highest moral conduct is that in which is displayed the fullest pursuit of physical well-being by the fullest discharge of normal function, yet moral obligations of supreme kinds forbid us to do so. The contradiction, Spencer informs us, is only seeming; it is only in the ultimate evolution and perfection of conduct, in the ideal man, the future finished product of exhausted evolution, that this identification of morality and the fullest enjoyment of life will be a fact. It is in our present imperfect condition that those incompatible

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 31. [2] Ibid. [3] Sec. 33.

obligations exist. There is no contradiction. Still, Spencer shows, that as ideal conduct is the full development and discharge of vital functions, there is something radically erroneous in the present way of judging that conduct incompatible with this pursuit of pleasure in the fullest measure in which we are capable of it, is good. "Non-recognition of these general truths (of biology) vitiates moral speculation at large."[1] He instances many parallel cases of injuries incurred or inflicted, through two different kinds of motives. In one set of cases people do not judge the conduct immoral; in others they do. One example from Spencer will suffice: "If as the sequence of a malady contracted in pursuit of illegitimate gratification, an attack of iritis injures vision, the mischief is to be counted among those entailed by immoral conduct: but if, regardless of protesting sensations, the eyes are used in study too soon after ophthalmia, and there follows blindness for years or for life, entailing not only personal unhappiness, but a burden on others, moralists are silent." But "it matters not from the biological point of view whether the motives are high or low."[2]

We must return to the cases in which supreme moral obligations command painful conduct, and forbid pleasant conduct. In these cases, clearly, the pleasure and pain standard is not the moral standard. The fact is admitted by Spencer, but he reminds us that for the greater part of sentient life, the pleasure and pain criterion rightly distinguishes between good and bad. And he explains how it happens that the criterion which he proposed as the universal test to distinguish good from bad, is not merely worthless but deceptive, when applied to a very wide range of human activity. In the first place the anomaly "merely implies that special and proximate pleasures and pains must be disregarded, out of consideration for remote and diffused pleasures and pains."[3] We

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 38. [2] Ibid. [3] Sec. 36.

shall subsequently find that, according to Spencer, all actions which involve any feeling of moral obligation, that is to say, which men call moral in the true sense of the word, are prompted by a preference of remote consequences over the immediate. So the immediate pleasant or unpleasant consequences which biology knows of are guides of action only outside the moral sphere. This biological pleasure and pain guidance will be strictly applicable to conduct, when man will be perfectly evolved. Then the highest moral conduct will be also the most pleasant, the path of pleasure and the path of duty will be identical. In the present stage of evolution, there is a partial misadjustment of the feelings to the requirements, and as long as that condition exists, there will be some anomalous results from the application of the pleasure and pain standard. We must, besides, admit that "it holds good for the lower and more completely organized portion of man's nature and must be more and more fully displayed throughout the higher part of his nature, as fast as his adaptation to the conditions of social life increases." [1]

The results of the biological view are to show that its estimate of conduct, ignoring the motive of the moral agent, is at variance with the moral view, in which motive is of the highest importance. The biological view puts on the same level kinds of action which the moral view estimates as of a very different character. A broken arm is treated by the surgeon in the same way, whether the injury be incurred in an attempt to rob a house or to save a life, and the motive of the action is of no more importance to biology than it is to surgery. Pleasure and pain, as far as these are attendant upon the functions with which biology deals, are not the criterion of moral action, for the course which they as a criterion of conduct dictate is frequently contrary to that imposed by moral obligation of a supreme kind. We have, therefore, not obtained

[1] The Data of Ethics, Sec. 36.

much light from biology on the principles which give authority to the moral law. So we follow Spencer to the psychological view, where we may expect to come face to face with moral obligation.

Now we come into the psychological sphere where we are to consider represented pleasures and pains as constituting motives. Here we must recall Spencer's fundamental principle, that all activity is an outcome of the laws which govern the motions of matter. The deliberation of the human will, its apparent self-determination, is an activity of matter, and consequently takes place according to an unavoidable determination resulting from causes over which it has no control. The will, therefore, cannot be free. Elsewhere, when treating of the will, Spencer shows that, in accordance with his views of the nature of all existence, to say that the will determines itself is an absurdity.[1] Motives, then, determine the will in the same way as the force of attraction causes an unsupported stone to fall to the ground.

An examination of the actions of creatures shows that in the lower grades living beings are prompted to action by simple direct feeling. In creatures of a lower type, the touch of food excites prehension. But, as we ascend the scale, we see action regulated also by representative or complex feelings, and a growing tendency of these latter to determine action, to the exclusion of the simple feelings; or, in other words, there develops a tendency to guide conduct more with regard to the ultimate than to the immediate consequences. A beast of prey, after it has acquired by its own or by inherited experiences the consciousness of danger attached to the attack of a large animal, which is its natural prey, will refrain from doing so. The savage who has learned that, if he gives way to his presentative feelings, and eats all his food to-day, he will starve to-morrow, is guided by his representative feel-

[1] Principles of Psychology, Sec. 219.

ing to refrain. In the civilized man we find guidance of the same kind. One man prompted by his presentative feeling of certain imagined pleasure to be derived from something belonging to another takes it;—he is a thief. Another in the same circumstances is guided and determined, not by the presentative feeling of immediate pleasure to be obtained from the object, but by representative and re-representative feelings of punishment, loss of reputation, injury, claim of person owning the property, etc. He does not take the goods of another, and is the conscientious man. Summing up, Spencer says: "Hence it follows that, as guides, the feelings have authority proportionate to the degrees in which they are removed by their complexity and ideality from simple sensations and appetites."[1] "The general truth disclosed by the study of evolving conduct, human and sub-human, that for the better preservation of life, the primitive, simple, presentative feelings *must* be controlled by the later evolved, compound, and representative feelings, has thus come, in the course of civilization, to be recognized by men."[2] And the recognition of this necessity is moral consciousness, or conscience.[3]

Conscience, then, with Spencer, is the feeling that the simple feelings must be controlled by the remote, that the remote feelings have authority over the proximate. Now, what does Spencer mean, or what can he mean, by the statement that the remote *must* control the proximate? He is stating a law of matter and motion; his statement can only be an enunciation of facts. Yet it is entirely at variance with facts, for the control of the proximate by the remote does not occur universally, otherwise immorality would be non-existent. At the present stage of evolution the truth recognized by men is that sometimes this preference of the remote to the proximate occurs, and in a great many cases it does not. If in the statement

[1] Data of Ethics, Sec. 43. [2] Sec. 45. [3] Sec. 44.

we substitute *ought* for *must* then it becomes intelligible to us; it is the enunciation of a rule calling for a certain line of action, and demanding the conformity of a will which is free to comply or not. But for Spencer this interpretation is an absurdity. The explanation, then, which Spencer offers of moral consciousness may have two meanings. In one sense, as a statement of fact, in which it has no bearing on obligation at all, it is false; in the other sense, it involves what Spencer calls an absurdity. What kind of authority is possessed by the remote over the proximate? Spencer can only explain this authority as a superior influence, that is a stronger force, to determine action. But the remote feelings have not that force always, because they do not always overpower the proximate. Authority, in the sense which it has in the mouths of men, means that the entity possessing authority has the right to demand the obedience of some subject,—a conception which, when applied to the relations between remote and proximate feelings constituting the Spencerian conscience, is pure nonsense. How can we, with any semblance of sense, talk of authority between feelings in a being whose every action is determined by the inevitable sequences of material motion? We might as well talk of the authority of gravitation over the expansion of gases. If gravitation or any other force prevents expansion, it is more powerful, and that is the end of its authority. If the remote feelings control the proximate, they are stronger, the man is conscientious; if the proximate and simple overpower the remote, the latter is not strong enough or not authoritative—and we have a thief. But to say that, though the simple do not yield to the remote, they ought to yield, is, if we accept Spencer's theory of good and evil, nothing but meaningless jargon.

The fundamental fact of the moral life is that, as the guide of conduct, reason pronounces a judgment, indicating that a certain line of conduct *ought* to be followed,

and the consciousness of the thinking subject manifests to him that he can comply with that direction of reason, or he can disobey it. There is no room in Spencer's theory of conduct for this fact. Moral obligation and determinism are incompatible. He tries to smuggle it in by making the terms *ought* and *must* convertible, and by using the term *authority* to express the preponderance of one force over another.

How far this view of conscience tends to supply an adequate basis for morality becomes evident by illustrating Spencer's principles in a concrete case. A man seeing some money belonging to another and imagining many pleasures that such money is capable of procuring for him, experiences a certain set of presentative feelings. He reflects, however, on ulterior, remote disadvantages of various kinds which we need not specify. Then arises a set of representative feelings. There is a struggle in his consciousness, between these two sets of feelings, for the mastery. Can we say that this man recognizes that "the simple and presentative feelings must be controlled by the later-evolved compound and representative feelings"? If he thinks that this will be the outcome of the struggle the opinion is premature. Can we say that he recognizes that, whatever may be the outcome, there exists for him an obligation of giving the preference to the remote feelings? Certainly not; because he is not free to select which course of action to adopt,—his will is to receive its determination from the motive which will prove the most authoritative, by overcoming the other. If the portion of matter which makes up his individuality is evolved, by the force which acts through evolution, up to a certain point, then the representative feeling will be more authoritative; if not, the presentative will prevail. Finally, the presentative do prevail—the man becomes a thief; the matter in the convolutions of his cerebral structure has been determined to a certain line of activity in accordance

with fixed laws of sequences "which must be fulfilled in the most developed being, as in every other thing."[1] In this case the agent, if he reflects on his conduct, in the light of Spencer's theory and the actual result, can only recognize that the later-evolved compound and representative feeling must not control, but must be controlled by the simple presentative feelings. He must recognize, too, that authority lies with the latter, since they are able to reduce the other to submission. And not alone is moral obligation non-existent and impossible, but there is not even room for it as a figment of the imagination; for the delusive existence which Spencer concedes to moral obligation depends upon the man's forming conceptions just the contrary to what the actual result forces upon him. And now, what are you going to do with this thief? Upbraid him for his dishonesty? That would be to hold him responsible for the working of the laws which rigidly govern the motions of the universe, in the highest and lowest forms of activity. You cannot lay it to his door that evolution has not yet reached a certain stage of perfection in a particular portion of matter. If, as a moralist, you are not satisfied with the result, you must address yourself to the Universal Force, or the Unknowable First Cause, which works through evolution, and indict it for theft. Its tardiness in the prosecution of evolution is the cause responsible for the crime.

There is, however, in human nature, as it actually is, that sentiment of obligation which has no reason for its existence in Spencer's ethics. So he gives an account of how it came into being, in the course of the combinations which the motions of matter have developed, as the moral being was woven out of the simple elements of brute life.

The feeling of moral obligation "is an abstract sentiment generated in a manner analogous to that in which abstract ideas are generated."[2] The abstract idea of

[1] Data of Ethics, Sec. 30. [2] Sec. 47.

color, for example, is obtained by the observing of various particular colors, in different bodies; then, by a cancellation of their various attributes in which they disagree, there is left outstanding the common attribute, color. Similarly, by the grouping of the representative feelings, which differ among themselves, but have a common component, and by the cancelling of their differences, the common component becomes relatively appreciable, and appears in consciousness as an abstract feeling. In this abstract feeling there are two elements, authoritativeness and coerciveness. The later-evolved feelings, Spencer tells us, have all along had more authority (we have seen what authority means when applied to the relations of feelings), and gradually, by the accumulation of experiences, man has come to feel that guidance "by the feelings which refer to remote and general results is usually more conducive to welfare than guidance by feelings to be immediately gratified. The idea of authoritativeness has therefore come to be connected with feelings having these traits; the implication being that the lower and simpler feelings are without authority." This reiteration of the authoritativeness of the representative feelings is an evasion of the problem, by confusing moral obligation with the predominance of one feeling over another. The representative feelings are not always authoritative in the only sense in which the word can be applied in Spencer's system, for they are frequently beaten. Besides there are representative feelings "occupied with the future, rather than with the present," which have not the slightest trace of consciousness of moral obligation associated with them. A farmer, for example, whose presentative feelings urge him to kill his hog to-day, is determined by the representative feelings, which tell him of better results if he wait a month longer, to postpone the immediate for the future. Is there any trace of moral obligation in this determination? Hundreds of similar examples in daily life

might be cited, in which the representative overcome the presentative, without moral obligation entering into the question at all. So much for Spencer's explanation of one element in obligation.

Another element which he detects in obligation is coerciveness. The gradual evolution of man from the brute called into being some influences enforcing a necessity of looking to remote results rather than to the immediate. The savage learned by experience that if he did not obey the chief, the remote result of action would be disastrous. In this fact we have in germ, Spencer tells us, all the legal sanctions which tend to enforce the preference of the remote over the immediate advantages. Another source of external coercion is the religious sanction. And here Spencer weaves once more his theory of the origin of all religious motives. As society develops, another sanction arises, from the approbation or reprobation of our fellow-men for conduct, in proportion as the presentative are controlled by the representative feelings. All these three influences are mediums of external coercion. They threaten extrinsic consequences of a painful nature to the man who looks to immediate results rather than to remote. By the constant experience of this external coercion applied to produce the preponderance of the representative over the presentative feelings, we have at length come to think that the representative feelings themselves carry with them some principle of coerciveness. "Thinking of the extrinsic effects of a forbidden act excites a dread which continues present when the intrinsic effects of the act are thought of; and being thus linked with these intrinsic effects, causes a vague sense of moral compulsion."[1]

The feeling, then, of moral obligation is a vague shadow of external compulsion, which we have come to associate with moral judgment. Evidently if we could but distin-

[1] Data of Ethics, Sec. 47.

guish things accurately, as they really are, it would be plain that the feeling of external compulsion has nothing to do with morality. But, through the imperfection of our present stage of evolution we are laboring under this self-deception. "Emerging as the moral motive does but slowly from amidst the political, religious, and social motives, it long participates in that consciousness of subordination to some external agency, which is joined with them; and only as it becomes distinct and predominant does it lose this associated consciousness—only then does the feeling of obligation fade." Extirpate the delusion wrought by projecting into our moral consciousness external coercion, and we are rid at once of the sense of moral obligation. "This remark implies the tacit conclusion which will be to most very startling, that the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory, and will diminish as fast as moralization increases." [1] Then Spencer tells us of the coming time when evolution will have reached its goal, and there will be no sense of moral obligation; yet man will be perfectly virtuous, doing the right always, incapable of doing wrong. Conscience, that delusion of our present imperfection, will have vanished. Our moral sentiments will go as straight to the mark as our sensations do now. We may still be able to imagine wrong-doing, but it will be an actual impossibility. Even now, Spencer points out that there are indications of the millennium. Here and there we find a husband who maintains and protects his wife without any thought of *must;* and there is a sporadic appearance of the truly conscientious man who does the right thing, and loves to do it, although he is quite unconscious of any sense of duty. Our author has not pointed out that, as is obvious to every reader, we need not wait for the future perfection of evolution to see the fading away of all sense of moral obligation. That condition of affairs may be realized by everybody who is

[1] Data of Ethics, Sec. 47.

desirous of it, by simply accepting Spencer's explanation of the phenomenon. Once grasp thoroughly and apply practically in conduct the view that moral obligation consists in the delusion that there is some external coercion enforcing morality, and moral obligation fades away out of consciousness.[1]

In the sociological view we find nothing bearing upon the establishment of moral principles of conduct. But we do find Spencer confusing two things that the evolutionary view is logically bound to keep distinct,—the end of evolution as the goal towards which the force that works through evolution is supposed to be striving after, and the end which the individual, in the same hypothesis, necessarily has as the goal of his activities. The end of the individual's conduct is the full development of his functions and faculties; society is a necessity for that full development, therefore, Spencer concludes,—and we are thoroughly in agreement with him—society is a good and an end to be realized. But its goodness from the individual's standpoint is the goodness of a means; it is good to him because it helps him to realize the supreme good, which, Spencer says, is the full development of his life. As a means it cannot become a supreme end, to which his own welfare ought to be subordinated. The preservation of society is, undoubtedly, of more importance than the good of the individual. But evolution attends to that part of the business; nature, "careful of the type, and careless of the single life," subordinates the individual end to the general good. But why the individual should make it his purpose to co-operate with evolution, with the result of hindering his own personal good and development, and above all why he *ought* to do so, is a question to which Spencer's theory of life can give no answer. Besides, in the man who does, and the man who does not sacrifice himself for the common good, we have two different de-

[1] Principles of Psychology, Sec. 47.

velopments of the same cosmic force equally respectable and equally irresponsible in all its manifestations.

Here we meet the truth which vitiates the laborious endeavors of Leslie Stephen and the rest of the evolutionary school to establish Ethics by taking society, the state, humanity at large as the unit, and the individual as an integral fraction. It is claimed that the glory of modern Ethics is to have discovered the great truth that society is an organism, and each individual essentially but a part. The metaphor representing the relations of the individual to society, as similar to the relation between the various members and the entire body, is as old as the time of St. Paul, and indeed much older. But it is only a metaphor. The individual has his own separate existence, faculties, functions; man is not a reasonable being with activities and tendencies necessary for self-preservation, race preservation, and development, because he is a member of society; but society comes into being because the nature of man makes it possible. Society is required for the due development and propagation of humanity, but each individual is a self-contained unit. Yet the evolutionists, and positivists who are not evolutionists, shut their eyes to this obvious fact, and build elaborate houses of cards on the assumption that a man is no more an independent entity than is the hand or eye. A straining of metaphors will not produce solid principles for a philosophical system.

Unless we recognize the individual as a free, responsible being, in control of his faculties, capable of recognizing a principle binding him to a certain course of conduct, even when he prefers another, we can establish no principle requiring him to co-operate for the good of society. Tell a man the good of society is his good; he may reply that he has other goods incompatible with the good of society, or with that particular good of his, which he finds in the good of society. Tell him that the

good which he may obtain from promoting the good of society is greater than that other personal good of his. He can answer: "Perhaps—in your estimation, yes. In mine, no." But, we may insist, he is bound to prefer the greater good. In what sense? he may reply. Bound, as an actual determination of cause and effect, he is not, for he acts otherwise. Bound in conscience, bound by moral obligation? Moral obligation implies a being with the attributes of personality, freedom and responsibility, the master of his own actions, which he can conform to a law; all which characteristics are incompatible with the idea of a being that exists only as an integral, dependent part of a whole.

The evolutionary view of the origin of rights is expounded in Mr. Spencer's *Justice*. He first traces it in the earlier development among gregarious lower animals. Co-operation among them is beneficial only when they observe the condition that each member of the group, while carrying on sustentation of self and offspring, shall not seriously impede the like pursuit of others. This *a priori* condition to harmonious co-operation comes to be tacitly recognized as "something like a law," and, finally, Mr. Spencer assures us, becomes an imperative law for creatures to which gregariousness is a benefit. The idea of justice contains two elements. On the one hand, there is that positive element implied in each man's recognition of his claims to unimpeded activities and the benefits they bring. On the other hand, the negative element implied by the consciousness of limits which the presence of other men having like claims necessitates. A formula has to be found which will unite these two elements—the liberty of each one, limited only by the like liberties of others. The formula proposed is: Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man. The authority of this formula rests on the fact that it is an *a priori* con-

ception that has arisen, not from the experience of the individual, but from the experience of the race.

Assuming the above formula as a general principle to be applied to particular cases, Mr. Spencer reaches the origin of a right. Whoever admits that each man has a certain restricted freedom, admits that it is right he should have this restricted freedom, and the several particular freedoms deductible may fitly be called, as they are called, rights.

Omitting any criticism on the explanation of the genesis of this *a priori* formula, we need hardly point out that either it is meaningless or it has a meaning which contradicts Spencer's entire theory. If every action of every man is determined by causes which he cannot control, and if he can no more control his desires and volitions than he can construct his own personality, then to say that he is free to do what he will in certain circumstances, but in others is under the necessity of recognizing certain restrictions, means nothing, or means that, in the latter case, the restrictions are always respected. The explanation is a mere begging of the question at best. When I admit that each man has a certain restricted freedom, Spencer says, I admit that it is right he should have this restricted freedom. True; but what we want to know is why I admit that each man has a certain restricted freedom, or rather the right to a certain restricted freedom. Again, the recognition by others that I have a right to my freedom, implies that they recognize themselves to be morally obliged to respect my freedom, and the restriction on my freedom is constituted by the moral obligation which I am under of respecting the freedom of others. Right and obligation are inseparable correlatives; the system which can tolerate no principle of moral obligation has but verbiage to offer as a theory of rights.

The results of the analysis of morality propounded in the name of evolutionary philosophy may now be summed

up.—Man, in all his conduct, is an irresponsible being, destitute of free will; all his actions are manifestations of the force which produces the redistribution of matter and motion. Moral obligation is a delusion destined to disappear from consciousness. The moral man's conduct is the result of cosmic determination,—he cannot elect to act otherwise. The behavior of the profligate and the scoundrel is the best possible conduct that we can expect from him, in the present state of evolution, and for the grade of evolution which he has attained, he is not responsible. If the common sense of mankind would permit them to accept this doctrine of morals and to apply it to the practice, the value of the scientific basis which Spencer has evolved to supply the place of religion would be demonstrated with a vengeance.

The history of the human race does not lend much plausibility to the presumption underlying all Spencer's theory, that the moral nature of man undergoes, with the evolution of civilization, a radical change for the better. If we compare the moral nature of man, to-day, in the most highly civilized nations, with what we know of his nature as it existed or exists in less civilized conditions, we find the same radical natural impulses to pursue the good of the senses, in conflict with the moral good. There are the same latent instincts of egoism, which the conscientious man subordinates to his sense of duty. The crimes which are reprobated in the Rig Veda, the Avesta and the Book of the Dead are actualities of human life to-day. The police courts of New York and Chicago can parallel every offence against morality that is to be found alluded to in the ancient records of the race. Not long ago London had proof that the cult of the æsthetic, in its highest form, may go hand in hand with the lowest form of immorality which was the plague spot of Greek life. Students of criminology know that underneath the surface of modern life lurks every abomination. Practices fatal

to the conservation of the species are working ruin to the interests of some European countries, and have associated themselves with certain sections of our own. There is a considerable amelioration of manners, a higher standard of public opinion, a more general acknowledgment of the solidarity of men. But the historian attributes these results chiefly to the beneficial influences of Christianity; and the maintenance of the product depends in the maintenance of the cause. There has been a development of the moral code consequent on the clearer insight into the nature of man, and the bearings upon one another of the various elements of the moral life. But to do is not as easy as to know what it were good to do. Low levels of morality have prevailed, not so much from want of insight into the moral law as from failure to put the existing knowledge into practice. "The ethical influence of civilization," Wundt very truly remarks, "is everywhere ambiguous. As it helps to deepen and refine man's moral ideas, so it opens up all sorts of paths which may lead him from the good. It creates new crimes,—crimes which, like certain kinds of imposition and deceit, are only called into life by the conditions of civilization; and it pursues the oldest forms of violation of the law, robbery and murder, with new weapons which magnify the moral gravity of the offence in proportion as their use demands inventive power and systematic calculation." [1] Yet Spencer tells us that the more systematic conduct is, and the better adjustment it displays of act to end, the higher and more perfect must be the estimate of it.

The appearance of the conscientious man did not await the development of the nineteenth century's civilization. Travellers have testified to the existence of honest savages and barbarians. And the arrival of the civilized white man among savage races has usually been followed by a

[1] The Facts of the Moral Life, p. 322.

deterioration, in some of the most important features, of the savage's morality. If a higher morality were merely a matter of cerebral development, produced slowly by the inherited experiences of ancestors, it would be impossible for the savage, on being converted to Christianity, at once to rise to an incomparably higher plane of moral life. Yet that such changes have been frequently witnessed nobody denies. Another fact of common occurrence, the converse of the former, is that moral character undergoes a rapid degradation in an individual who finds himself exposed to immoral influences against which he does not contend. Are we to suppose that a young man of good character who, by association with evil influences, soon sinks to a low depth of moral degradation, has experienced a retrogression in cerebral development, which has obliterated in his brain the registered experience of several generations of ancestors? Civilization and morality have frequently progressed in company; but they are not on that account to be connected as cause and effect. They have frequently been found journeying in different directions. The measure of a nation's civilization is a very unreliable standard by which to estimate its practical morality. The argument for the coming of the millennium when the path of perfect duty will coincide with the path of complete pleasure rests on a very arbitrary interpretation of the consciousness of a just man. The common opinion of mankind is not that the loving husband and the strictly honest man must be bereft of all sense of moral obligation, because they find a pleasure in virtuous conduct. On the contrary, anybody would judge that such men cherished a high sense of duty. Spencer's future age, when human nature will be incapable of aught but virtue, and virtue will necessarily be accompanied with nothing but pleasure, physical and mental, is as gratuitous an assumption as Rousseau's Social Contract. And we may trust to the common sense of mankind to send it to join, after

as brief a term of popularity, the Social Contract in the dust heap of philosophy.

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The defects of the theory are exposed by

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CONCLUSION.

TREND OF AGNOSTICISM TOWARDS THEISM—THE ETHICAL SOCIETY—EDUCATION—SOCIALISM—THE OUTLOOK.

I.

AMONG many discouraging conditions of to-day which have given rise unnecessarily in some minds, inclined to look only at the surface of events, to serious doubts as to whether religion is not destined to disappear entirely, as a factor in the life of civilization, there are some indications affording to those whose insight is deeper, grounds for hoping that a conviction of the worthlessness of independent morality is forcing itself upon modern thought. The study of psychology, ethnology, and of the history of religions has established the fact that man is essentially a religious being, and that he cannot exist without giving expression to this sentiment. The Agnostic and evolutionist is slowly and reluctantly recognizing that the conception of the Unknowable, as it was set up by Spencer, is utterly incapable of filling the religious craving, or of being accepted as the only idea which reason can form of a First Cause of the Universe of which the moral being, man, is a part. We are beginning to hear and read less about the Unknowable, and a great deal more about the Power that makes for righteousness; less about Infinite Energy and Cosmic Force, and more about the Eternal Source of a Moral Law. In fact evolutionists, whilst continuing to use the phraseology of Agnosticism, are covertly smuggling into its connotation almost everything that is meant by the term God as used in the First Part of the Summa of St. Thomas. Instead of a blind, inexorable energy,

which one was forbidden, in the name of philosophy, to conceive as in any way responsive to the aspirations of the human heart, we find the Deity represented as a being calling for profound veneration. A persistent din is kept up against the *anthropomorphism* of Christian ideas, and meanwhile everything that is meant by personality, intelligence and will, when applied by Catholic Theology to God, is accepted as necessarily involved in the conception of the Absolute. In short, Monotheism is substituted for Agnosticism, and those who have performed the trick of legerdemain assure the audience that no change at all has been effected; Agnosticism was Monotheism from the beginning; a film of prejudice prevented unscientific Christians from perceiving the true bearing of evolutionary religion. A typical passage from Professor Fiske will illustrate the modification of the Agnostic and evolutionary conception to a connotation which embraces the idea of God as the source of the Eternal Law, the sanction of conduct, perceived through the manifestations of the visible universe. "It is enough to remind the reader that Deity is unknowable just in so far as it is not manifested to consciousness through the phenomenal world,—knowable just in so far as it is thus manifested; unknowable in so far as infinite and absolute,—knowable in the order of its phenomenal manifestations; knowable in a symbolic way, as the Power which is disclosed in every throb of the mighty rhythmic life of the universe; knowable as the eternal Source of a Moral Law which is implicated with each action of our lives, and in obedience to which lies the only guaranty of the happiness which is incorruptible, and which neither inevitable misfortune nor unmerited obloquy can take away. Thus, though we may not, by searching, find out God, though we may not compass infinitude or attain to absolute knowledge, we may at least know all that it concerns us to know, as intelligent and responsible beings.[1]

[1] Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy, Vol. II., p. 470.

The conceptions expressed in this passage are colored with a theistic tinge for which there is no parallel to be found in Spencer's view of morality.

Commenting on the attacks to which Spencer's idea of the Unknowable has been subjected, from all classes of thinkers, Professor Fiske remarks that these attacks are made because their authors have ignored the precise connotation in which the term *Unknowable* is employed. These theologians of every school and penny-a-liners of no school write, he says, without even a suspicion that the symbol may have a precise value, purified from its ordinary vague connotation. The fault which Professor Fiske imputes to the opponents of Spencer is one which he falls into himself, in his entire reasoning against the Christian idea of God, as anthropomorphic. We presume that before undertaking to refute and pillory Christian theology the Professor studied the doctrine of St. Thomas as to the notion of God, and the manner in which reason may reach it. If he had not ignored what is there so clearly expressed, that in applying the terms personality, will, intelligence, to God, theology, Catholic theology at least, uses these terms in a sense purified from all connotation of limitation, or anything else that would involve anthropomorphism, he would have forborne a great deal of his baseless attacks on Christian theology. If he had mastered the Catholic conception that the Moral Law is the expression, in the nature of the human mind and of the entire Universe, of the Eternal Law of Righteousness necessarily existent in the Deity, he would scarcely have informed his readers that in the Christian Doctrine moral authority and obligation are derived from the arbitrary command of a mythologic quasi-human Ruler.[1]

By admitting God as the basis of the law of righteousness, the evolutionist makes a long stride towards truth; and in as far as he recedes from the original position of

[1] Op. cit., p. 416.

independent morality, bears implicit testimony to the validity of the Christian doctrine. But another principle equally necessary to the conception of morality is still antagonized by the "scientific school." Determinism is supposed to be a necessary implication of the views which prevail as to the origin and end of the universe. As long as free will in man is denied, to speak of a Moral Law, Sin, and Righteousness is but meaningless jargon. Unless the human agent is master of his actions, and capable of electing between conformity to a moral standard, and defiance of it, he is not a moral being; and all the circumstance of law, come it from God, or come it from man, all moral classification, praise, blame, reward, are but trumpery stage devices to carry on the lugubrious farce of life. For the evolutionist the human personality is nothing but a knot of conditions, which are incapable of determining themselves; the will necessarily obeys the strongest motive. If this be assumed as true, then violation of the moral order is a result which the strongest motive necessarily forces upon the agent; and when Mr. Fiske speaks of the sense of sin as chiefly composed of "self-condemnation for the *inexcusable* infraction of nature's ordinance," he is indulging in what he calls meaningless verbiage. Grant that determination reigns over the human will, and any author of obscene literature can justify his efforts for the spread of evil, by exactly the same plea as Spencer invokes as his warrant for the production of the Synthetic Philosophy; "He, like every other man, may properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through whom works the Unknown Cause; and when the Unknown Cause produces in him a certain belief, he is thereby authorized to profess and act out that belief." [1] If determinism be true, it is the Unknown Cause, not the helpless puppet of determinism that violates the Law of Eternal Righteousness.

[1] First Principles, Sec. 34.

II.

Another unconscious testimony to the soundness of Christian Ethics is to be found in the development of thought among the members of the Ethical Society. Deriving their inspiration from the theory of Kant, the promoters of this movement undertook to found religion upon duty. The innate respect of the mind for the claims of duty is, in this view, an adequate motive for the realization of morality; the common desire to spread more and more love and respect for duty is to supplant all dogmatic creeds and prove the only true and lasting bond of religious union among men.[1] The Society as a body, according to the exposition of its doctrines by Dr. Coit, is more Catholic than any church, for whilst all churches require belief in a personal Creator, the Ethical Society leaves everybody free to believe whatever suits his fancy. Atheism, Materialism, Agnosticism, are all equally respectable and indifferent. The object of the Society is to make charity practical, until the simple devotion to benevolence will have become a religion before which all creeds shall vanish.

The spirit of the Society breathes a noble estimate of moral value; and an enthusiastic devotedness to the welfare of others. But the weakness of its position appears when we come to inquire what are the motives and forces which it relies upon to make its principles produce the great results which are ascribed to them so liberally in advance. If its doctrines are to uplift society and sweep the English-speaking world in a tempest of enthusiasm, as Mr. W. R. Washington Sullivan predicts, the Ethical Society must have at hand some principle of moral force, stronger than anything that Christianity has been able to bring

[1] See The Ethical Movement Defined; Stanton Coit, in Religious Systems of the World: London, 1892.

into play. For, obviously, the practical programme of benevolence proposed by the Ethical Society does not contain any precepts that are not included in the Commandment of Christ: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Has it found any clearer insight into the nature of things, or discovered any novel formula of duty with which to conjure into activity the dormant good tendencies of human nature? Has it invented any new method by which to exterminate the selfishness, the sensuality, the love of lower goods, in the human heart? Has it, in short, found a more satisfactory answer to the everlasting *why* than has been provided by religion? The only answer which Dr. Coit gives to it is not calculated to carry conviction to any mind. He declares that for those who do not feel the sacredness of duty there is no possible answer to be given. The man who does not experience the overwhelming claims of duty is as incapable of having them made clear to him as a deaf man is of appreciating music. The mere question, "Why should I do right?" implies, in the opinion of Dr. Coit, a perversity of the moral nature. He writes: "If any one asks 'Why should I love my fellowmen?' we must say, 'Stop, this is blasphemy against mankind and we will not tolerate it without a protest against such degrading scepticism.' Love for mankind we see and feel, in our own experience, to be inviolable; it is final. Love knows no ulterior motive beyond itself, and will permit no doubt as to the fact that it is its own justification." [1] Now this method of disposing of the question will not satisfy our intelligence. The moral nature is rational, and as such requires a rational account of duty. It is not satisfied with any account which reduces benevolence to a mere impulse of gregariousness. Recognizing the existence of moral obligation, not in any sceptical or blasphemous spirit, but with the conviction that the most profound impulse of our rational

[1] The Ethical Movement Defined, p. 792.

nature must be susceptible of a rational explanation, reason will persist in seeking for a source of authoritativeness which consecrates and confers a binding force on the calls of duty. Dr. Coit's interpretation of the motives of Jesus contains but half a truth. Answering the question, "Why should Jesus go to the cross if that were the end of Jesus?" he says: "It is easy to tell why Jesus *would* go to the Cross: He would because He loved his fellowmen, and said He could best serve them by dying for them." Any one who takes the trouble of studying the Gospel can see that the motive underlying all other motives in the mind of the Saviour was obedience to the Eternal Law of His Father's will: *Not my will but thine be done.* He loved His brethren because He first loved His Father; He imposed on His followers the commandment of universal love and benevolence (of which the Ethical Society sometimes seems to claim the copyright), because we cannot love God with the love that is demanded of us, unless we love our neighbors. The second table of the Decalogue is made by the Founder of Christianity, consistently with the nature of things, to stand upon the first. Every attempt to make it independent destroys the authority of its appeal to the mind.

The chief means which the Ethical Society relies upon for moralizing society is the spread of knowledge which shall teach men the natural consequences of the wrong act upon the bodies and minds and fortunes of the doers. This is the old error of Greek philosophy which confounded knowledge with virtue. Morality, however, is a concern rather of the heart than the intellect; it depends upon the good will rather than upon knowledge. If men were to act in conformity with the light which they actually possess, the condition of society would be incomparably higher than it is. Among the uneducated classes nine times out of ten, Dr. Coit assures us, wrong-doing is due to ignorance of the natural consequence of the wrong act

upon the bodies, minds and fortunes of the wrong-doers. On what statistics is this opinion based? Nine times out of ten the drunkard knows that he is ruining his health, his intellectual faculties, his worldly prospects. Nine times out of ten, the thief, the burglar and the profligate are thoroughly aware of the result of their conduct, yet knowledge of results fails to be an effectual restraint upon vice. And does knowledge of consequences prove a very powerful restraint upon passion among the educated classes? The divorce courts, the criminal courts in which the fraudulent bank director, the embezzling clerk, the educated forger so frequently appear, the occasional revelations in the press, give a negative answer. Knowledge of the injurious results consequent upon immorality may merely promote prudence and moderation in the pursuit of vice; it may be employed to obviate disagreeable consequences of immorality, so that bad conduct may be pursued with impunity. The promotion of virtue is to be secured rather by influencing the heart, than by imparting a knowledge of Physiology, Psychology, and Social Economics. There is but one kind of knowledge which proves a specific for immorality: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." When the religious sanction is discredited, the natural consequences inevitably attendant upon immorality are brought forward as the great and sufficient sanction. They provide, says Dr. Coit, a powerful appeal to enlightened self-interest. To start out with the motto of Kant, Duty for duty's sake, and then invoke the principle of utilitarianism, is an evidence that the doctrine of the Ethical Society is sadly embarrassed for a sanction to support it. Nobody has shown more conclusively than Kant, that to make self-interest the guardian of morality is the destruction of morality. If the philosopher of Königsberg could hear an ethical teacher proposing to enforce the principle of devotion to duty by an appeal to enlightened self-interest, we can fancy how

he would protest. "Stop, sir, this is blasphemy against both morality and logic."

The sanction of society Dr. Coit would look upon as a powerful aid to morality. The influence of society on morality depends upon what is the general moral level prevalent among the members who make up society. If a high moral tone prevails the sanction of society will contribute to enforce the moral law; though it will often result in producing a state of affairs, where mere external conformity and legality will take the place of genuine internal morality. It will stigmatize with its disapprobation whatever is gross, and at variance with the conventionalism of life. But it will take very little cognizance of the state of the heart. It knows nothing of sin. At best its motto will be that "vice loses half its evil by losing all its grossness." And unless there prevails in the community an estimate of virtue fixed on some absolute basis, unless there is some measure of right and wrong, outside man himself, to invoke for the sanction of morality, the influence of society's appreciation of moral values will become the strongest force for corruption. In what direction tended the influence of the social sanction in the degenerate days of Greek and Roman corruption? What made slavery of so long a life? What perpetuated the senseless and immoral practice of duelling? What, in short, has been at all times one of the most inveterate foes of moral progress? The sanction of society. If the sanction of society, among us, makes for righteousness, it is because the prevalent estimate of moral values is based on Christian principles. Social opinion, where it is sound, has been formed by Christian thought, and it is enforced by Christian influences. Tear away the supports, and sooner or later, the building which leaned on them will collapse. It is true that Christian influences have been eliminated out of the private lives of a great many individuals, and almost entirely out of public life. But its influence

endures in the atmosphere of the civilization which it created. The sap of the old belief, to use a phrase of Renan's, still flows through all the ramifications of modern society. As long as Christian influences predominate, the sanction of society is on the side of righteousness. But, if the principles of Jesus of Nazareth were to be universally abandoned for the Gospel of enlightened selfishness, the change from one principle to another so radically opposed to it would necessarily, in the long run, obliterate from public opinion every vestige of the influences which were derived from the discarded faith. What morality we should have left can easily be estimated.

If we compare the doctrine published by Dr. Coit five years ago, with the views expressed by Mr. W. R. W. Sullivan in a recent work which professes to speak for the Ethical Society, as it is represented by the branch which is established in Portman Square, London, we find a very decided advance towards Catholic principles, and, consequently, a much more consistent and satisfactory view of the moral question. This author rightly repudiates the absurdity of appealing to physical laws for the sanction of the moral, and abjures the utilitarian for the Kantian principle. *Back to Kant* is his motto. But, though he is evidently unconscious of the fact, he goes back further than Kant; he goes back to Thomas Aquinas, and presents the true view of the moral law in terms which entirely coincide with the spirit and language of Catholic theology. In the chapter entitled Ethics and Theism, he writes:

"Law we define as an ordination of reason. From first to last it is so. From the laws which we daily obey to the everlasting laws holding the spheres together—can we account of them as other than the expression of reason? So we do account of the moral law, with this essential difference, that while the rules of man may be arbitrary, the moral law is no arbitrary enactment, but essential righteousness; it is the Supreme Mind and Will in actual

manifestation—the moral law is God. I mean thereby that it could not be otherwise. It is beyond the power of omnipotence to dispense with it. Right recognized as right could never be other than right, it could never become wrong, any more than two and three could become interchangeable ideas. One may say now that this definite act is right, and a century later that it was wrong; but for all that, for all the imperfection, the limitation, of our intelligence, as much in the moral as in the mental spheres, one thing is certain, that the right does exist and is eternally dissevered from the wrong."[1] This is the language of Catholic theology, not that of Kant. For Kant the moral motive is the reverence for the determination of the free spirit imposing a law on itself. Mr. Sullivan's motive is reverence for the dictates of reason because it is the exponent of the Eternal Law of Righteousness necessarily existing in God. In declaring, as he does in his Preface, that his principle is the absolute supremacy and independence of morality, Mr. Sullivan is doing himself an injustice. His exposition shows that the moral law depends on the Eternal Law; and that man's dependence on the Supreme Intelligence is the only impregnable basis of morality.

The message of the Ethical Church as formulated by Mr. Sullivan is not new; it has been announced and reiterated to mankind for the past eighteen hundred years. It has been realized in the lives of countless thousands who have passed their lives in devotion to God and humanity. It has brought forth innumerable examples of the highest sanctity, heroism, and devotedness. It has been the fruitful parent of countless institutions for the alleviation of human suffering and the general amelioration of society. If evil prevails, and there is always a plentiful crop of tares among the wheat, it is because men have resisted Christianity, and many of its nominal pro-

[1] Morality as a Religion, p. 46.

fessors have not made its principles the guide of their conduct.

Because universal righteousness does not prevail, the Ethical Society would take Christian morality out of the Gospel ground in which it grew, and transplant it into the colder atmosphere and barren soil of a philosophic theism; or rather they sever the trunk from the root and expect that by dancing around it they will make it bring forth fruit more abundantly. Philosophic theism has done but little for mankind. The lofty philosophy of Greece never produced any general results among the people; and was associated even in the teachings of the philosophers themselves with views on practical morality that no civilized nation to-day would tolerate.

The sources of all that is high in the moral code of civilization are the Gospel doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, the immortality of the soul, the wickedness of sin, as an offence against Infinite Holiness and an outrage on Infinite Love, the nobility of self-sacrifice, the inwardness of true morality. These doctrines, held with an unfaltering faith, have produced, and will always produce, results which nothing else can. They provide the strongest possible motive for rectitude of conduct, and afford a worthy ideal to man and woman; they reach the deepest feelings of the human heart, and call into action dynamic forces in human character which no other motives can evoke. They have not succeeded in shaping the conduct of all that professed them; for man is free and God respects His own gift. But it savors more of visionary enthusiasm than of sober good sense to fancy that what the Christian faith has not achieved, with all these immeasurably strong motives, brought together in one consistent system to bear upon conduct, will be produced by a scheme of morality which takes for a lever one or two fragmentary and detached truths, and for the firm conviction of faith substitutes a hesitating *perhaps*.

Whatever is good in the moral standard of society has been the result of the Gospel teaching. The evil which is apparent has grown up in spite of Christianity. If evil prevails it is because the principles of the Christian religion have not been made the efficient rule of conduct by those who profess it. What has been achieved by Christianity has been achieved because men have taken to heart the Church's message that we have not here a lasting city but seek one that is to come, and all that is implied in it. Only on the firm belief that life here is but a preparation for an endless existence hereafter does reason find a satisfactory explanation of the ceaseless, inextinguishable aspiration of our higher nature after good and happiness, and the will sufficient strength to enable it to dominate the impulses of the lower appetites, and realize in conduct the rule of right.

III.

The erroneous supposition that a science of Ethics can be constructed without reference to God, or that practical morality may be realized entirely independent of religion, leads to a corresponding false view of moral education. Knowledge is a good of human nature and one of the highest, for it is the perfection of the intellect. As such it is worthy of pursuit, so that the development of his intellectual powers is a right and a duty of man. Besides, knowledge is necessary as a means to enable the child afterwards properly equipped to profit of the opportunities and discharge the obligation which life shall bring to him. Knowledge is power; but power can be used rightly or wrongly. The value to the individual and to the society of which he is a member of the knowledge acquired by education will depend chiefly on the manner in which the power will be used. Moral character will be the principal determinant of the results which education will produce

in conduct. Technical skill may make a useful mechanic, or a skilful burglar. Literary ability may render its possessor a force for the dissemination of corruption, or a power for the elevation of society. If the child is to be made a useful member of society he must be taught the knowledge which he will afterwards require. But education is a failure, unless he is also trained and taught in such a manner that he may be relied upon afterwards to use his knowledge rightly. If education is to be a blessing for the child, and for society, the development of moral character is indispensable.

Knowledge itself, and the discipline which study gives, the tastes which it produces, have a tendency to moralize character. It produces a disinclination to what is coarse and gross, and therefore indirectly conduces to the desired results. But it is beyond question that these influences are entirely inadequate to safeguard the interests of morality. A high degree of intellectual and æsthetic culture may be contemporary in individual and national life with profound depravity.

In a democracy, more than any other form of political society, the welfare of all depends upon the prevalence of sound moral principles among the people. The staunchest of republicans, John Milton, wrote more than two hundred years ago: "To make the people fittest to choose, and the chosen fittest to govern, will be to mend our corrupt and faulty education, to teach the people faith not without virtue, temperance, modesty, sobriety, parsimony, justice."[1] Any system of education which devotes itself to cramming the intellect without forming the heart to good is radically defective, and will produce men wanting in the first element of a nation's stability, moral character.

During the years when character is more easily moulded, the best results can be obtained only when moral training

[1] Milton's Prose Works, Misc. I., Vol. II., p. 126. Edition, Bell, London, 1894.

is given by all the authorities which control the child. The school ought to support and, if necessary, supply the deficiencies of home education. If the moral training of the schools is to be sound and efficacious, it must above all inspire a sentiment of reverence for duty, a respect for the authority of the moral law, a true appreciation of virtue, and a profound conviction of the necessity for living righteously. Unless these convictions and feelings are engraved deeply in the mind no permanent effect upon character can be made. It is wasting time and perverting opportunity, to teach specific duties without teaching the reverence for duty itself. The old Chinese sages struck the right keynote of education when they made the burden of the moral teaching, "Be reverential."

Now how are we to inculcate the necessary reverence for the good and love of virtue, without tracing duty back to God? All endeavor to teach the sanctity of duty, whilst ignoring the primary duty which alone stamps a consecration upon all others, is building upon sand. Ignore God, and nothing is left to appeal to except utility. The only motive available is selfishness. The child is equipped for his life-long struggle between duty and inclination by bringing him to believe that "I ought" means "It is pleasant." When self-interest, passion and temptation arise to urge him to evil, he will not find much difficulty to persuade himself that the converse of the proposition holds good, and that, therefore, the conduct which holds out to him the most enjoyment cannot be wrong. If justice is to rest on the principle that Honesty is the best policy, its claims will be overlooked when opportunity offers a sufficiently large bribe to dishonesty. To teach morality efficaciously, to form character upon a worthy ideal, imbue the mind with sound principles and the heart with the necessary reverence we must invoke the sanction of religion. In education as in Ethics God is indispensable. With his customary terseness, His Holi-

ness, Leo XIII., has expressed the truth which is the first principle of moral training: "Without religion there can be no moral education deserving of the name, nor of any good; for the very nature and force of all duty comes from those special duties which bind man to God, who commands, forbids and determines what is good and evil. And so, to be desirous that minds should be imbued with good, and at the same time to leave them without religion, is as senseless as to invite people to virtue after having taken away the foundation on which it rests." [1]

IV.

The present conditions of society, pressing unfairly on the masses of the people, are, in the opinion of all, sadly in need of reformation. The century which is opening is destined to see great and sweeping changes brought about by the forces which are working inexorably towards what may prove a radical reconstruction of the present economic basis of society. Panaceas, general and particular, for prevailing evils, offered on all sides, are summed up under the generic head of Socialism. As long as Socialism aims merely at economic reforms, it bears directly on morality only in as far as justice is involved in the measures which it advocates. Vast and far reaching changes in present economic and social conditions may be established without any violation of rights, and consequently with the full sanction of religion. Conscientious Catholics and Protestants have been and are Socialists. It is, however, undeniable that Socialism, as understood by its most prominent advocates, propounds schemes of economic reform, founded on principles which involve the very existence of morality and religion. The motives of Socialism are the amelioration of the condition of the working classes, the regulation of human relations on a

[1] Encycl. Affari vos.

basis of even-handed justice, and the construction of society on a plan which would make injustice impossible. It takes for its first and fundamental truth the brotherhood of man, and the consequent equality of all. But after borrowing this principle of Christianity, Socialism parts company with Christian belief, and sets up for itself an entire philosophy of life. It borrows all the rest of its ethical capital from utilitarian and evolutionary philosophy; but it follows its principles logically to consequences from which most utilitarians and evolutionists have shrunk. Its entire doctrine has been compendiously formulated by Albert Schäffle: "Socialism means Democratic Collectivism in Economics, Republicanism of the people in politics, Materialism in Philosophy, Progressive Optimism in Ethics, and Atheism in Religion." [1] Accepting the Spencerian dogma, that the development of physical life is the true end of conduct, it makes temporal welfare the goal of all human endeavor. Karl Pearson is an Agnostic after the original type, and knows nothing of Mr. Fiske's source of Moral Law:—"The modern socialistic theory of morality," he says, "is based upon the agnostic treatment of the supersensuous . . . Corporate Society . . . the State . . . not the personified Humanity of Positivism . . . becomes the centre of the Socialist's faith. The polity of the Socialist is thus his morality, and his reasoned morality may, in the old sense of the word, be termed his religion." [2] Socialism of this type stands on a synthesis of the worst errors in philosophy and ethics. It assumes a materialistic view of the Universe, ignoring the existence of a First Cause. It recognizes nothing in man above the elements of physical life. It not alone ignores the question of immortality, but it undertakes to regulate the entire range of human

[1] See Aussichtslosigkeit der Socialdemokratie (4th Ed.), p. 7, Tubingen, 1893.

[2] The Ethics of Free Thought, pp. 318–319.

conduct on a plan incompatible with a belief in another life. Positive science is beginning to acknowledge that the question of a future existence is one lying entirely outside its sphere. Not so Socialism; for it would take charge of every branch of human life, and shape it on a plan necessarily excluding any consideration of an ulterior end. Every person in all his relations, even in what concerns the conjugal union and family ties, would be subject to State control. This control would be exercised according to the principle that the enjoyment of this world's goods, in the fullest measure attainable, is the end of human life. The State would enforce on all the obligation of shaping their conduct according to the philosophy summed up in the advice: Eat, drink and be merry, my soul, for to-morrow we die. Socialism would ignore the truth that there are in human nature tendencies and aspirations which are not to be satisfied with bread alone, nor even with public parks, museums, scientific lectures, and free theatres. It would trample upon that innate sense of personal dignity of which every human being worthy of the name is conscious. The individual as a person would cease to exist, and become merely an atom in the social mass. Society, in the eyes of the school of Bax and Bebel, is the only fountain of rights, the only term of human obligation, and the source of authority from which there is no appeal. In fact, abolishing God, Socialism would invest the State with Divine authority; for in the practical working of such theories executive power would necessarily be entrusted to men authorized to enforce laws bearing upon the most private rights, and invading the sanctity of the domestic circle. Public authority would determine what career in life each man should choose, where he should live and, according to some Socialists, order or forbid him to marry. In return for this absorption of rights, the State would give him a measure, according to its estimate of his services, of temporal goods,

All this system of Government would be carried out, it must be remembered, not by some abstraction called the State, but by men prone to human limitations, weakness, and passion; and these individuals would be entrusted with powers that could not prudently be given to George Washington or Marcus Aurelius. Such dreams may be worked out in speculation; but they could only be durably realized in a nation of men who would have lost every spark of manliness, and forgotten the meaning of liberty. Yet Socialism of the most radical character is the logical outcome of utilitarianism and evolutionary Ethics, which make the temporal welfare the end of conduct, and treat man as a being having no moral value except with reference to the social organism. "A State Collectivism," says Laurie very truly, "in which the unqualified conception of an 'organism' logically lands us, by restraining the free activity of each self-conscious personality, strikes not only at the liberty of the citizen, in the vulgar acceptance of the term 'liberty,' but cuts off at the fountain-head the spring of the entire spiritual life of man. It is profoundly immoral; for with free activity must perish all that distinguishes man from the animal, and all must go in religion, philosophy, literature and art, by which human life has been exalted and dignified. If these things still held a place in the life of the race it would be as a dim tradition of happier epochs. It has not been the race as a collective body which has created literature and art and religion—no, not even political constitutions and laws—but great personalities, in presence of whose genius the mass bowed the head in submission or acquiescence. An organized and consistent Collectivism would, like an absolute paternal despotism, be the grave of distinctive humanity."[1] If those who are the oracles of ethical science are not prepared to follow Socialism to these disastrous conclusions, it is time to abandon the principles

[1] Ethica, p. 227. See Flint: Socialism, Chap. X.

of independent morality, and instead of looking to the laws which govern the redistribution of matter and motion, and to the social organism for the origin of moral obligation, listen to right reason, which proclaims that God alone is the source of Righteousness. Those who are working for the reform of social conditions can arrive at satisfactory and durable results by enlisting on their side, instead of antagonizing, the influence of the religious instinct of mankind, and by recognizing man as a person deriving his dignity, his duties, and his rights to all that becomes a man from the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. The rights of all are best safeguarded when the sacredness of duty is brought home to all. In the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, Leo XIII. has admirably demonstrated how, in the enforcement of the doctrine of Christianity blending justice and charity, lies the true remedy of the present evils. The mission of the Church, like that of Her Divine Founder, is not directly concerned with economic or political organization, but with the relations of man to his Creator. This relationship, however, as we have seen, is not confined to one isolated aspect of life, cut off from all that regards man's attitude towards his fellows. It permeates every branch of conduct, so that man's life is rightly adjusted towards his Supreme End, only when all his subordinate relationships are regulated by right reason according to the moral law. There is no division of empire in the human personality, in such a way that one part belongs entirely to Cæsar, and the other to God: all belongs to God. Hence Christianity, embodying the true view of man's transcendent duties, necessarily contains guiding principles by which the social world may be organized according to the Supreme Law of Righteousness. The safe and only reliable road open to society for deliverance from the present great and prospective greater evils lies, not in the *ignis fatuus* of Socialism, but in the maxims of the Gospel: and if it once more seeks first the

Kingdom of God, society shall find the desired temporal amelioration added thereto. When we recall the fact that all authority is from God, that in Him alone is to be found an unyielding basis of all right and duty, we cannot but see that the modern State which undertakes to safeguard the rights and promote the moral progress of its subjects yet treats as non-existent the relations of man to God, deprives itself of the most powerful force at its disposal for the accomplishment of its mission.

V.

Irrepressible in its force, the religious sentiment has steadily shown throughout all history a tendency to deviation alternately in two opposite directions. There has been a perpetual oscillation between irrational credulity and scepticism. Only when Divine Revelation is the guiding light has reason found any consistent middle way of truth between the extremes of error. Our own times have illustrated the working of this law. Positivist science demonstrated to its own satisfaction that the God of Christianity was a creation of the human brain, then forthwith it set up the material universe as a gigantic fetich, and amid the sounds of sackbut and symphony from pantheistic poets, called upon mankind to fall down in adoration. The Divinity of Christ has been rejected as an irrational doctrine, and a large section of the enlightened, deifying departed worthies renew the crudest form of ghost worship under the name of the Religion of Humanity. Positivist philosophy having disseminated the doctrine that the individual as a moral being depends entirely on the social organism, Socialism steps in, calling upon all to bend a slavish knee while the State proclaims the death knell of personal liberty in the first commandment of the new dispensation: I am the Lord, thy God; thou shalt have no other god before me. Agnosticism,

which glorifies itself as the sublimest expression of reason enlightened by the discoveries of modern science, offers the multitude a rechauffé of the Upanishads disguised with a flavoring of scientific terminology. The popular mind, unsettled by the influences of scientific scepticism, finds a vent for the religious sentiment in Buddhism divested of the severe asceticism which made Buddhism respectable, or in the vagaries of spiritualism and theosophy. The human mind must believe in something; man has been made for God, and "his heart is restless till it rests in Him." The religious and the moral impulse have been implanted in the soul as the two forces which acting together should carry man to the goal of his nature. When one has diverged from the straight path of truth, the other has shown a corresponding aberration. Where false ideas and principles have been adopted in religious belief, they have inevitably reacted in the moral world. Truth is one, and a true view of moral principles requires as a necessary concomitant a true conception of religion. The implication of the religious in the moral and the moral in the religious is inevitable. We frequently hear the assertion that religious belief has no bearing on conduct. In a restricted particular sense this is true; for it is quite possible that individuals may ignore the guidance of their religious convictions. But, in a more comprehensive and general sense, it is false. Moral and religious doctrine, in any system of belief, or philosophy necessarily re-act upon each other. To deny this is to assert that we can specify a straight line without fixing its direction, or lay down a road and ignore its terminus. Religion defines the ultimate goal of life; morality is the way.

Every system of thought which can be dignified with the title of a philosophy must embrace a theory of the universe, and of human life. From the views held on the origin of things will be derived a corresponding theory of Ethics. Errors in the former field of speculation will

filtrate into the other. This truth has been verified from the dawn of philosophic speculation down to the current theories. The evolutionist postulates a reign of universal determinism in the Cosmos; and is thus committed to the denial of free will, the reduction of moral obligation to a phantom, or a confusion of perceptions. Much more rapidly and directly than philosophy does religious belief reflect itself in morals; for while philosophy properly belongs to the region of abstract knowledge, religion is born in the heart, no less than in the cognitive faculty. The belief which prevails in any religion as to the nature of God, His connection with the world, the cause of moral evil, the destiny of man, contains implicitly a characteristic system of morality. Frequently time will be required to develop the consequences of religious principles; but sooner or later the germs of evil latent in religion will make their appearance in morality. Sometimes the full consequences of religious error have been avoided by a happy inconsistency between belief and practice. But this evasion of results is only temporary; the mind ultimately perceives the anomaly. Then either a gradual change in morals takes place, or, if the consequences of religious principles are palpably irrational, and shocking to the moral sense, belief gradually fades, and the mind finds itself in a reaction towards scepticism.

It would be an easy but odious task to show how every deviation from Catholic dogma has resulted in perverse ethical doctrine; and the rejection of the Church's teaching regarding the economy of Redemption has led to a profound disturbance of the basic principles of morality. It is this inevitable law of cause and effect which vitiates the assumption underlying every scheme of independent morality. The full system of Christian morality, in its harmony of principles, perfection of detail, complete symmetry, and spiritual beauty, corresponds in every particular to Catholic dogma, and cannot, without

injury to the structure, be adapted to any other foundation.

If scientific theism were to become the universal religion of Civilization, as some predict, the Ethics of Christianity, concrete in laws, customs, public opinion, would endure for some time, and perish slowly, but inevitably. There is however, no reason to dread such a catastrophe. Modern scepticism is but a repetition of conditions which have frequently arisen in various phases of human history. The pendulum is even now swinging back again. Many signs indicate that the tendency to irreligion is on the wane. Shall it be through protracted experience of evil, or by the quick shock of revolution, that society will learn that it is a bitter thing to have deserted God? No man can tell. Recent events show how rapidly the course of human affairs may take a turn that baffles the shrewdest predictions. There is a providence which shapes our ends ; while the future is hidden by a veil which we cannot pierce, one thing we do know on the assurance of Everlasting Truth, to whatever stress Society may be subjected, whatever is to be the condition which humanity is to experience, as long as physical laws shall allow human life to flourish on the earth the Church of Jesus Christ shall endure to guide men along the path of truth to God, of all things the beginning and the end.

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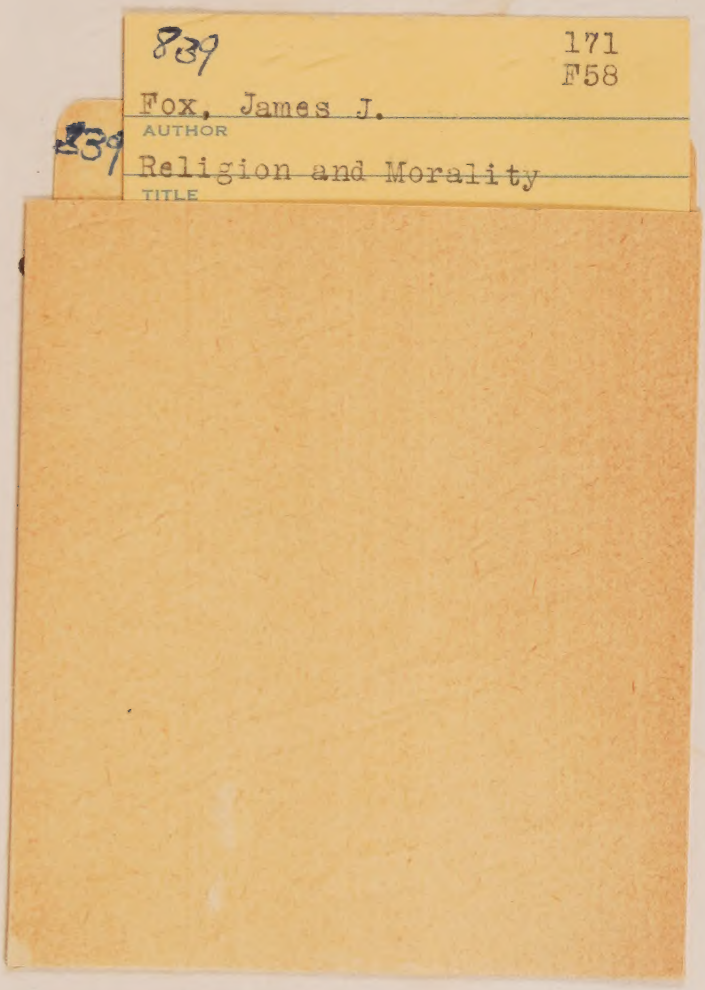

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